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The Dominican Liberator: Father Edward Paul Doyle, O.P.'s Response to the Holocaust

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This paper is dedicated to the memory of Father Edward P. Doyle. This internationally recognized liberator wished for all who came to Providence College to know that the Holocaust happened. Getting to know Father Doyle through his archival materials has taught me lessons in the importance of faith and memory, and this paper is a dedication to the impact he made on myself and countless others.

"You have to balance your study of the Holocaust with your hope. You cannot abandon hope, because if you abandon hope you abandon all that your human spirit really strives for. And if you abandon hope you're eventually going to become like one of the active participants, willing participants of the Nazi party and those part of torturing the Jews."

- Father Edward Paul Doyle, O.P., as relayed by Jane Lunin Perel

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INTRODUCTION

The Holocaust was the German National Socialist German Workers (Nazi) Party's effort to eliminate Europe's Jewish population as a part of dictator Adolf Hitler's Final Solution. Many of the individuals responsible for the Holocaust were convicted of crimes against humanity for their horrific actions at the Nuremburg Trials after World War II. Survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust did not let their stories go untold. Many wrote about their experiences so that the world would know what they went through and to expose the evils of which human beings are capable.

Individual survivors and witnesses each remember and reflect on their experiences differently. Some are angry at the Nazis for their inhumane actions. Some are angry at God for allowing these evils to take place. Others learned from their experience. Edward Paul Doyle, O.P. was one of the latter. A Dominican Friar at Providence College, he served as an army chaplain for the United States Army in Germany during World War II. While in Germany, Father Doyle helped to liberate Nordhausen concentration camp where he witnessed the horrors of the Holocaust. Father Doyle recorded his experience and reflections in photographs, speeches, and interviews which he donated to the Providence College Archives. In studying the documents that Father Doyle left to the college, his strong faith and trust in God stand out in contrast to others' reactions and experiences.

Father Doyle never wrote a book about Nordhausen, but other liberators of the camp did. *Timberwolf Tracks* is a book that describes the movements of Father Doyle's division of the military, the Timberwolves, throughout Europe during World War II. Along with the strategic

movements of the division, the book also includes the firsthand experience of Sergeant Ragene Farris of the 329th Medical Battalion as a liberator at Nordhausen. Farris described the camp as an other-worldly place.[1] He was the American hero coming to save the living prisoners from the squalor in which they had been dwelling.

Historian Michael Hirsh's work, *The Liberators*, describes first-hand accounts of liberators' experiences at concentration camps. The work includes Major Haynes Dugan's experience at Nordhausen and his description of the horror of seeing thousands of decomposing bodies. The work also describes the experiences of two other liberators who were amazed by the machines being built at the camp and angry with the civilians in the surrounding area who remained aloof to the monstrosities occurring at the camp.[2] Hirsch offers a well-rounded description of the reactions of liberators at Nordhausen as he includes multiple perspectives and viewpoints.

Evelyn M. Monahan and Rosemary Neidel-Greenlee's book, *And If I Perish*, documents the experiences of some of the nurses present at the liberation of Nordhausen. This work, like *The Liberators*, helps readers understand the human experience of liberating a concentration camp. The nurses described their experiences working with the living prisoners they encountered at the camp, and their shock at the severe starvation and illnesses of the living, as well as the startling number of corpses they found.[3]

Elie Wiesel was a notable Holocaust survivor who wrote the memoir *Night* about his experience as a Jew living in Poland during the Holocaust and as a prisoner in Buchenwald

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[1] Leo A. Hoegh and Howard J. Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks: The History of the 104th Infantry Division 1942-1945*, (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1946), 330.

[2] Michael Hirsch, *The Liberators: America's Witnesses to the Holocaust*, (New York: Bantam Books, 2010), 56.

[3] Evelyn M. Monahan and Rosemary Neidel-Greenlee, *And If I Perish*, (New York: Random House, 2003), 444-445.

concentration camp. Buchenwald is the larger concentration camp of which Nordhausen was originally a part. *Night* captures Wiesel's struggle for survival as well as his struggle with his faith. Wiesel's experience caused him to question God. He explained, "as for me, I had ceased to pray. I concurred with Job! I was not denying his existence, but I doubted his absolute justice."[4] Over the course of his memoir, Wiesel described how his previously strong faith gradually disappeared throughout his experience during the Holocaust.

Unlike these books, Father Doyle's story currently exists only in a series of documents in the Providence College Archives. The college has recently begun to honor Father Doyle's memory. As professor emerita of Providence College, Jane Lunin Perel, stated, "he had a usefulness that was never recognized" by the college for a long time.[5] His story has not yet been told with regards to his experience liberating Nordhausen and his reflections on what he witnessed. Father Doyle's reactions are quite unique as his Dominican charism greatly influenced his actions and reactions during and following the liberation. Through his steadfast faith, his inclination to share his experience, his community values, and his love for people of all faiths, Father Doyle truly embodied the spirit of Saint Dominic in his reaction to the liberation of Nordhausen and to the Holocaust as a whole.

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[4] Elie Wiesel, *Night*, trans. Marion Wiesel, (New York: Hill and Wang – A division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), 45.

[5] Jane Lunin Perel, interviewed by Jacqueline Michels, Providence College, January 10, 2019.

CHAPTER ONE

GETTING TO KNOW FATHER DOYLE: THE MAN, THE PRIEST, AND THE ARMY CHAPLAIN

Father Edward Paul Doyle was a Catholic chaplain who helped liberate Nordhausen concentration camp. His reaction and response to the events that he witnessed are unique compared to those of other liberators. Father Doyle's background can help explain his distinct reaction to the events. By understanding his education, his career as a Dominican, and his role as an army chaplain, one can better understand why Father Doyle reacted to Nordhausen's liberation in the way that he did.

The Man & The Priest

Father Doyle grew up in Fall River, Massachusetts.[6] His parents were Anne Harrison Doyle and Patrick James Doyle.[7] His father was a real estate dealer, and his mother was a homemaker.[8] Father Doyle was the couple's sixth child, and he grew up with eight siblings. The man was clearly accustomed to living in community by the time he became a Friar. Growing up

[6] Albert Drexelius, letter to Terence S. McDermott, December 6, 1936.

[7] "Information Sheet About Edward P. Doyle," Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Digital Publishing Services.

[8] "Information Sheet About Edward P. Doyle."

in a family of eleven people in the city of Fall River must have meant close living quarters and shared space amongst siblings.

In 1930, Father Doyle attended Aquinas High School in Columbus, Ohio.[9] The Dominican Friars established this school with the intention of creating a four year college, but "this project in Columbus never reached fruition," and the Dominicans established Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island instead.[10] Both schools are run by the Dominican Friars in the Eastern Dominican Province of Saint Joseph.[11] Father Doyle became a Catholic priest of the Order of Preachers, otherwise known as the Dominicans. He most likely encountered the Dominicans as a student at the Dominican high school and college he attended. Perhaps the Friars who served as Father Doyle's teachers, professors and chaplains during his high school and undergraduate careers inspired him to join the order.

Father Doyle entered the Dominican novitiate in 1932 after spending two years at Providence College.[12] He was a part of the "novitiate of Saint Joseph's Province at Saint Rose Priory, Springfield, KY."[13] Father Doyle took on the name Paul as his religious name when he entered the novitiate.[14] The Bishop of Columbus, Ohio, James J. Hartley, ordained Father Doyle

[9] Ibid.

[10] "Aquinas College High School History," Aquinas College High School Alumni. http://www.columbusaquinas.com/History.html

[11] "Catholic & Dominican," Providence.edu. https://catholic-dominican.providence.edu/; "Aquinas College High School History."

[12] Erin R. King, "Community Mourns Loss of Dominican Liberator," *The Cowl*, Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Digital Publishing Services.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

into the priesthood on May 17, 1939,[15] just over five months before the Second World War broke out in Europe in September of 1939.

As a Dominican Friar, Father Doyle was well-versed in Theology. He used his knowledge to minister to students and parishioners as an educator and as a chaplain. Father Doyle taught at Providence College from 1941 to 1954, but he took a brief hiatus from teaching from 1943 to 1946 to serve as an army chaplain.[16] After teaching at Providence, Father Doyle served as a professor of theology at Seton Hill College from 1954 to 1957, at Mount Saint Mary in Newburgh, NY from 1957 to 1963, and at Siena Heights College from 1963 to 1970.[17] He served as a Research Fellow at Yale Divinity School from 1970 to 1971 before again serving as a professor of theology from 1971 to 1973, this time at Molloy College.[18] After serving as a professor, Father Doyle served as a chaplain at Amherst College in 1976, at Saint Raymond Parish in Providence from 1976 to 1987, and at the Summit Medical Center in Providence in 1987.[19] For the remainder of his life, Father Doyle lived at the priory on Providence College's campus, working in the city comforting the sick and dying just as he had done as an army chaplain.[20]

At the age of 89, Father Doyle passed away on April 12, 1997 at Providence's Miriam Hospital "after an illness."[21] He spent his final years living a "totally private existence" at

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[15] King, "Community Mourns Loss of Dominican Liberator."; Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Digital Publishing Services, "News Bureau Information Sheet for Dominican Friars."

[16] "Information Sheet About Edward P. Doyle"; King, "Community Mourns Loss of Dominican Liberator."

[17] "Information Sheet About Edward P. Doyle."

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Perel, interviewed by Michels.

[21] King, "Community Mourns Loss of Dominican Liberator"

Providence College's Saint Thomas Aquinas Priory.[22] He did not share his experience at Nordhausen with the Providence College community until just a few months before he died. Many employees of the college at the time had no idea that Father Doyle was even living on campus.[23] Many did not even know who Father Doyle was. He went about his day caring for the sick and dying in the city of Providence, continuing the work he had begun as an army chaplain.

The Army Chaplain

From 1943-1946, Father Doyle worked as an army chaplain for the Timberwolf Division of the United States Army.[24] In this role, he travelled with the Timberwolves throughout Europe during their deployment in World War II. As the descriptive text, *Timberwolf Tracks*, explained, "the work of the Chaplains of the Timberwolf Division is a part the record of the units. Wherever the troops have gone – in training on maneuvers, or in combat – the Chaplains have gone with them, sharing their life and bringing the ministrations of religious faith."[25] Father Doyle was one of many army chaplains of all different religious beliefs. All of the chaplains worked together as *Timberwolf Tracks* notes that "religious work in the Division has always been marked by wholehearted cooperation from all levels of command. It has showed a splendid spirit of teamwork among the Chaplains themselves. Of varying creeds, they have been one in their faith in God and their desire to serve as soldiers of God and country."[26] The Chaplains worked together to best serve the soldiers of the division. Father Doyle served with the division "during a period of

[22] Perel, interviewed by Michels.

[23] Ibid.

[24] See Figure 1 for a portrait of Father Doyle in his Army Chaplains' uniform.

[25] Hoegh and Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks*, 441.

[26] Ibid., 443.

intensive training and during six and one-half months of continuous arduous combat."[27] The chaplains were just as much a part of the battalion as the soldiers.

Father Doyle was particularly dedicated to and enthusiastic about his role as chaplain to the Timberwolves. *Timberwolf Tracks* highlights the dedication of all chaplains in their division. The book explains that "the heroic action and unselfish devotion to duty of all the 104th's Chaplains was speedily recognized by the Division, as is evidenced in the long list of decorations awarded these men of God."[28] The army chaplains were so dedicated to ministering to the soldiers of the division that they frequently put themselves in danger to deliver religious services. As explained in *Timberwolf Tracks*, "conducting religious services … was a duty faithfully performed under wide and varied circumstances. During combat operations, whatever place available was used as a chapel … Almost any place became a church and every day was Sunday."[29] The Timberwolf Division's chaplains were particularly dedicated to their roles.

Major General Terry Allen spoke of Father Doyle specifically putting himself in danger to perform his duties as army chaplain. He explained that "there were times when Father Doyle celebrated mass under shelling, and there were times when he, without being asked, went willing and well forward into the danger zones of the division to offer consoling thoughts to the men just going into or coming from combat."[30] Father Doyle did not back down from performing his duties in the face of danger. He fearlessly risked his own life to console soldiers of the division or say a Mass for them.

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[27] Terry Allen letter to Frederick C. Foley, November 6, 1945, 1.

[28] Hoegh and Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks,* 442.

[29] Ibid., 443.

[30] Allen letter to Foley, November 6, 1945, 1.

Father Doyle also received praise from his fellow chaplains for his own extraordinary service to the division. In correspondence with the Dominican Province of Saint Joseph Head Provincial, Reverend Terence S. McDermott, O.P., Reverend Bernie McCarthy praised Father Doyle for his outstanding ministry to hospitalized soldiers. McCarthy stated that Father Doyle was "doing an excellent job. I don't mean that by way of ordinary compliment. Many of his men have come thru this hospital, and even the Protestants have been enthusiastic about Doyle. They like to tell how he works and what he has done for them, etc."[31] Father Doyle left an impact on the men of his division, even those who did not share his religious beliefs.

The generals whom Father Doyle served also recognized his exceptionality as a chaplain. For example, in correspondence with the President of Providence College, Major General Allen claimed that he knew "that any man associated with Father Doyle will miss him, because of his fine spiritual and moral help which he so unhesitantly [sic] gave to his men."[32] Father Doyle left an impression on those he ministered to. He touched their lives in ways that they would not forget. Allen further praised Father Doyle saying that he "is a man with the highest personal ideals, exemplary habits, and possesses an excellent character. He is highly intelligent, thouroughly [sic] dependable, and has a great deal of common sense along with a pleasing personality. He was thouroughly [sic] respected by the officers and enlisted men who have been associated with him."[33] People loved Father Doyle for his pleasant personality and excellent character, and respected him for his obvious dedication to his role as army chaplain.

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[31] Bernie McCarthy letter to Terence S. McDermott, Jan. 4, 1945.

[32] Allen letter to Foley, November 6, 1945, 1.

[33] Ibid.

Father Doyle's dedication to the men that he ministered to extended far beyond the timespan of World War II. For his silver jubilee celebration of 25 years in the priesthood, Father Doyle asked permission to take a trip to Europe. As a part of his trip, Father Doyle planned to "revisit the two U.S. army cemeteries in Belgium and Holland where many of [his] division members rest."[34] Almost twenty years after the end of World War II, Father Doyle wanted to spend his silver jubilee celebration paying his respects to the men he ministered to as the Timberwolves' army chaplain. His care for these men was truly genuine as it lasted over the course of decades and remained strong during a time when he was supposed to be celebrating himself. Father Doyle was clearly very dedicated to his role as army chaplain to the Timberwolf division.

Father Doyle's superiors commended him for his service to soldiers of all faiths. Major General Terry Allen noted that "as the Catholic Chaplain of the 413th Infantry Regiment, Father Doyle personally supervised the spiritual and moral needs of the Regiment which included the non-Catholic personnel."[35] He further commended Father Doyle for setting a positive example for the Catholic men of his division when he "spiritually and materially assisted men of other religious faiths."[36] The Reverend Bernie McCarthy further affirmed that Protestants appreciated Father Doyle and the ministry he performed for them.[37] Father Doyle did not discriminate against any of the men in his division. He loved all equally regardless of their beliefs.

As explained in *Timberwolf Tracks*, all of the Timberwolf chaplains received awards for their spectacular service to the U.S. military. Father Doyle specifically was awarded the Bronze

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[34] Edward Paul Doyle letter to Father Provincial, December 7, 1963.

[35] Terry Allen letter to Frederick C. Foley, November 6, 1945, 1.

[36] Ibid.

[37] McCarthy letter to McDermott, Jan. 4, 1945.

Star "for meritous [sic] service in connection with operations in Belgium, Holland, and Germany."[38] A newsletter sent to the faculty and staff of Providence College announced that Father Doyle's "regimental commander personally ask that [he] receive the award" which was unusual.[39] Father Doyle stood out to his commander as a brave and honorable member of the division. He put his heart and soul into his role as an army chaplain, and this genuine care and effort showed as the soldiers of his division loved and respected him, and his generals praised his work.

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[38] "Father Doyle Back At P.C.," *Providence Visitor*. Providence College, Philips Memorial Library, Digital Publishing Services.

[39] "Father Doyle Back At P.C."

CHAPTER TWO

DOMINICAN CHARISM

As a Dominican Friar, Father Doyle dedicated his life to emulating the spirit of Saint Dominic de Guzman. Father Doyle's Dominican charism shaped his personality. In fact, his beliefs as a Dominican Friar greatly influenced his actions as a military chaplain and his reaction to the events he witnessed at Nordhausen. A general understanding of Saint Dominic's character and the Dominican Charism can help give one a more complete understanding of Father Doyle.

Father Doyle's full name is Father Doctor Edward Paul Doyle, O.P. The "O.P." signifies his status as a Dominican. The abbreviation stands for Order of Preachers. As Father John A. Langlois, O.P. writes in his brief history of the Dominican Province of Saint Joseph, "preaching for the salvation of souls – this has been the primary mission of the Dominican Order since its foundation in 1216."[40] Saint Dominic wanted everyone to know the love and goodness of the Lord, so he made it his mission to share the message with them. As Dominican Friar Fabio Giardini described, "prayer and apostolic zeal are clearly the two most essential elements in Dominic's spiritual life and experience."[41] Saint Dominic had a relationship with the Lord which he fostered through his prayer life, and he worked like Christ's apostles to help others cultivate a

[40] John A. Langlois, "The Dominican Province of Saint Joseph: A Brief History," (Pamphlet, New York, 1994), 7.

[41] Fabio Giardini, *Spirit of Saint Dominic*, (Summit, NJ: Dominican Nuns of the Perpetual Rosary, 2012), 68

similar relationship with Him. Dominicans dedicate their lives to preaching for the salvation of souls to follow in Saint Dominic's footsteps.

Saint Dominic's Order of Preachers was radically different from other Catholic orders at the time. He changed the rules of monastic customs. For example, he "simply abolished the 'vow of stability in the monastery' and replaced it with a commitment to itinerant preaching."[42] Whereas previously most religious orders consisted of monks who lived lives of solitude and prayer, Saint Dominic founded an order of friars who integrated themselves into the community, motivated by a religious zeal. These new structures and observances that he created were "better adapted to his charism and mission."[43] Friars could better serve and minister to the community if they lived in community themselves. Dominican Friars do not solely pursue salvation for themselves, but pursue the "salvation of the human family."[44] The Order of Preachers lives within a community to help bring the love of God to all those who live within it.

The Dominican emphasis on preaching draws from their own personal spirituality. As explained by Father Raymond Smith, O.P., "all of the Dominican preacher's spirituality leads to an overwhelming zeal to preach."[45] Dominican Friars hold a passion for their own faith in their hearts which inspires them to help others find that faith. As described in *The Spirit of Saint Dominic*, "it is more perfect to shed light than nearly to shine, i.e., to share with others the fruits of contemplation than to enjoy them for one's self alone."[46] The Dominicans believe that God

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[42] Giardini, *Spirit of Saint Dominic*, 71.

[43] Ibid., 74.

[44] Ibid., 79.

[45] Raymond Smith, O.P., "The Spirituality of the Dominican Preacher," *The Dominican Preacher*, (Pamphlet, Dominican Province of St. Joseph, 1992), 28.

[46] Giardini, *Spirit of Saint Dominic*, 145.

called them to both a contemplative life to form their own faiths and to an apostolic life to share the fruits of their contemplations with others.[47] The Dominicans value contemplation to feed their apostolic zeal.

The same spirituality that caused Saint Dominic's apostolic zeal also incited an extraordinary joyfulness in him. As explained in *The Spirit of Saint Dominic* "he is remembered for his *hilaritas,* i.e., the joyfulness and serenity of his countenance."[48] Saint Dominic's relationship with God inspired him to spread love and joyfulness to all whom he encountered. As explained by Jordan of Saxony, one of Saint Dominic's early disciples, "Dominic embraced in the wide bosom of his charity all human beings."[49] He genuinely loved and cared for every person he met. He did not discriminate; all human beings were worthy of his love, and they loved him in return. As one witness testified: "Dominic was amiable to all. Rich and poor, Jews and pagans all loved him, with the only exception being the enemies of the church."[50] Naturally, enemies of the church would not trust a person who dedicated his life to the Catholic faith. However, even those who were not a part of the church or were indifferent to the Catholic faith loved Saint Dominic for the love and care he showed to them. Father Fabio Giardini, O.P., author of *Spirit of Saint Dominic*, attributed this love and care to "his positivity and joyfulness."[51] Saint Dominic's spirituality and joyfulness contributed to his relationships with the people he ministered to. His order today aims to embody this same joyfulness when ministering and preaching.

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[47] Ibid., 130-131.

[48] Ibid., 16.

[49] Ibid., 17.

[50] Ibid., 52.

[51] Ibid., 37.

Saint Dominic's own joyfulness caused him to embody a deep compassion for others. In *The Spirit of Saint Dominic,* Father Fabio Giardini shared anecdotes of Dominic's self-giving for the sake of others. For example, he once sold everything he owned so that he could feed the hungry.[52] On a different occasion, he "once offered himself as a hostage to free the only son of a widow from slavery – since he was not able to earn enough money to ransom him."[53] Saint Dominic empathized so much with others that he sacrificed himself to help them. Giardini further explained that he acted "out of a divine charity toward the neighbor (as God's children) which should be the specific motivation of a Christian apostle."[54] The charism of the Dominican preacher is to sacrifice oneself for the sake of another in the true spirit of Saint Dominic.

Father Joseph Langlois emphasized that this Dominican compassion does not only apply to faithful Catholics. He explained that "the salvific influence of [Dominicans'] preaching can reach everyone" and "endure especially among those who are far away from the faith."[55] This statement aligns with Saint Dominic's own beliefs as he had "a burning compassion for sinners."[56] He did not discriminate based on the moral state of a person. He offered the same love and compassion to all he encountered. The Dominican Friar emulates this spirit as they show compassion to all whom they preach to, including sinners.

One of Saint Dominic's primary qualities was his steadfast character. According to Giardini, a phrase that frequently appears in writings about this Saint was his "consistency of

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[52] Ibid., 29.

[53] Ibid., 31.

[54] Ibid., 149.

[55] Langlois, "The Dominican Province of Saint Joseph," 25.

[56] Giardini, *Spirit of Saint Dominic*, 11.

personality."[57] Saint Dominic acted genuinely in all situations; therefore he presented a consistent personality to the world. Giardini explained that "in addition to his steadfast character, Dominic possessed a beautiful sincerity of intention and behavior, especially when dealing with others."[58] His sincerity was the root of this consistency in character.

In addition to a steadfast character, Saint Dominic also had a steadfast, unwavering faith. Smith explains that "the reading, studying and praying of the Bible was the source of Dominic's solid spirituality."[59] He maintained a solid basis for his faith which supported his own unyielding faithfulness. The Dominican Friar must emulate this steadfast faithfulness in order to preach about their faith to others, as one can only share what they experience themselves.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, community is an important value of the Dominican order. As stated by Raymond Smith, O.P., "Just as Jesus and his intimate followers lived a common life, so Dominic and his modern followers live a common life."[60] Dominican Friars live in community with one another and immerse themselves into the communities of the people they minister too. The Friars at Providence College live together in the Saint Thomas Aquinas Priory and immerse themselves in the Providence College community so that they can better serve the students at the college as campus ministers and professors. As an army chaplain, Father Doyle immersed himself into the Timberwolves' community to best serve the soldiers in his division. The Friars of the Order of Preachers live in communities in order to preach to the individuals who live within them. Community life is an important value of the Dominican order.

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[57] Ibid., 13.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Smith, "The Spirituality of the Dominican Preacher," 23.

[60] Ibid., 26.

Father Doyle exhibited many of Saint Dominic's qualities in his role as an Army Chaplain for the Timberwolves. Understanding this Dominican Charism will help one to understand Father Doyle's motivation for his actions and values backing his reaction to the Holocaust.

CHAPTER THREE

NORDHAUSEN CAMP

In order to understand Father Doyle's reaction to the Holocaust, one must first understand what he encountered during the liberation of Nordhausen. Nordhausen was a unique concentration camp as most of the camp existed in tunnels within a hill. When Father Doyle and the Timberwolves encountered Nordhausen in April of 1945, they discovered only a small portion of the prisoners who were enslaved there. Nevertheless, this powerful experience greatly impacted the liberators, especially Father Doyle.

Nordhausen was only one of the many concentration camps established under Hitler's rule of Germany. The camp is also known as Dora-Mittelbau or Mittelbau-Dora, but is often referred to as Nordhausen due to its proximity to the town of Nordhausen in Germany.[61] Nordhausen was originally constructed during the Nazi's secret rearmament plan prior to World War II.[62] The camp was built into the Kohnstein hill near the German Harz Mountains.[63] Before the Kohnstein became Nordhausen concentration camp, the I.G. Farben Company had begun mining anhydrite and

[61] "Nordhausen (Dora-Mittelbau): History & Overview," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed August 8, 2018. https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/history-and-overview-of-nordhausen; Gretchen Engle Schafft, and Gerhard Zeidler, *Commemorating Hell: The Public Memory of Mittelbau-Dora*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011).

[62] Schafft and Zeidler, *Commemorating Hell*, 20

[63] Schafft and Zeidler, *Commemorating Hell*, 20.; "Nordhausen (Dora-Mittelbau): History & Overview."

gypsum from the hill in the 1920s.[64] In 1936, German engineers had enlarged the mining spaces in the Kohnstein to be used as store units for oil and fuels.[65] The site of Nordhausen served the Third Reich long before it was a forced-labor camp during the Holocaust.

This underground storage site became a concentration camp during the Holocaust. Originally, Nordhausen was a sub-camp of Buchenwald.[66] This is the same camp from which Elie Wiesel, author of *Night* and chairman of the council that sponsored the International Liberators Conference, was liberated.[67] The Buchenwald administrators sent prisoners to Nordhausen to construct a "large industrial complex."[68] By the end of 1944, the subcamp had become so large that Nazi administration ordered that Nordhausen be made into its own, independent concentration camp.[69] At its height, Nordhausen was a large, industrial concentration camp.

The large underground shafts in the Kohnstein hill made Nordhausen the perfect place for the Nazis to construct experimental weapons in secret. Nordhausen was "the site of one of the largest underground factories in the world where the V-1 and V-2 missiles were assembled.[70] The fact that the factory was underground meant that the Allies would have a difficult time seeing the

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[64] Schafft and Zeidler, *Commemorating Hell*, 19.

[65] Ibid., 20.

[66] Edward P. Doyle, "I Was There," (Invocation, International Liberators Conference of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, United States Department of State, Washington, D. C., October 27, 1981).

[67] David Shribman. "Holocaust Survivors Hold Reunion with Liberators," *The New York Times*, October 28, 1981.; Wiesel, *Night*, 103.

[68] "Nordhausen (Dora-Mittelbau): History & Overview."

[69] Ibid.

[70] Schafft and Zeidler, *Commemorating Hell*, 19.

rocket production from the air and that the plant would be kept safe from Allied bombing.[71] The Third Reich worked to perfect these experimental weapons to retaliate against the allied powers.[72]

The Nazis were not building these experimental retaliation weapons on their own. With most of the able-bodied German men at war, the Nazis employed slave labor as the solution to staffing this project.[73] These slaves came from the concentration camps. The first prisoners who were sent to work at Nordhausen were those who were active in an underground organization at Buchenwald.[74] Camp officials sent these prisoners to Nordhausen as a punishment for their attempts to sabotage the work at their camp in Buchenwald.[75] The fact that Nordhausen existed as a punishment compared to other concentration camps is a testament to the awful conditions prisoners at Nordhausen experienced.

Nordhausen housed a diverse group of prisoners. The Nazis enslaved the prisoners at Nordhausen for many different reasons and captured them from a number of different places. When liberators encountered the camp in 1945, they found people who spoke French, German, Polish, Czech, and Russian.[76] The prisoners at Nordhausen came from countries across Europe. Furthermore, the Nazis did not only enslave Jews at this camp, but also "political prisoners" and "members of the French intelligence."[77]

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[71] Ibid.

[72] This program was supervised by Wernher von Braun – a physicist who the United States later employed to work in NASA.

[73] Schafft and Zeidler, *Commemorating Hell*, 20-21.

[74] "Dora-Mittelbau/Nordhausen Concentration Camp," Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team, accessed August 8, 2018. http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/othercamps/dora.html

[75] Ibid.

[76] Hoegh and Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks*, 331.

[77] Monahan and Neidel-Greenlee, *And If I Perish*, 445.

Like all concentration camps, the SS ran Nordhausen. The SS, or the *Schutzstaffeln* (German for "protection squads"), were a Nazi elitist group established "for special duties."[78] In 1941, Heinrich Himmler was the SS leader who took responsibility for executing "the Final Solution: the systematic annihilation of the Jewish population in Nazi-occupied Europe in specially constructed death camps."[79] Himmler's SS staffed the concentration camps, including Nordhausen, to oversee the prisoners.

The prisoners at Nordhausen worked tirelessly on the V-1 and V-2 missiles. The SS treated these prisoners brutally. As prisoners explained to the Timberwolves during liberation, "on the slightest suspicion of sabotage the workers were shot. No workers had ever been allowed to leave the camp, and when they became too weak to work, they were abandoned to die and their bodies burned at the crematorium within the grounds."[80] The SS officers at Nordhausen did not tolerate slow and tired workers. As described by the Timberwolves, "reports indicated that approximately one hundred bodies were cremated per day, and there were about thirty corpses piled on the ground awaiting such treatment. The bodies showed many signs of beatings, starvations, and torture."[81] Prisoners seemed to have pushed themselves to work as hard as they could to avoid being sent to the crematorium for being too weak. On top of the prisoners' own efforts to push themselves, the SS officers physically abused the overworked prisoners.[82] Prisoners explained to the United States Third Armored Division at liberation that "each day they were awakened at 0400 and marched the

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[78] Jackson Spielvogel and David Redles, *Hitler and Nazi Germany: A History*, 7th ed., (Boston: Pearson, 2014), 53.

[79] Ibid., 262.

[80] Hoegh and Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks*, 332.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

two miles north to the camp at Dora, where they worked in underground tunnels until dusk… Prisoners told the Third Armored men that the SS guards regularly beat them."[83] Further, "prisoners spoke of others of their comrades who had been assigned to work on the new, secret V-3 rocket and were then killed to assure that the secret would be kept."[84] The SS officers deprived these prisoners of basic human needs, including sunshine. They worked tirelessly for their captors who beat and killed them regardless of the work they produced. The prisoners were mere gears in the Nazi missile-building machine.

The Nazis stored the V-1 and V-2 missiles underground in the chambers built into the Kohnstein, so the workers at Nordhausen worked primarily underground. The SS officially put Nordhausen into operation in spring of 1944.[85] Until that point, the prisoners working at Nordhausen lived inside of the underground tunnels with no special living quarters.[86] These prisoners worked without daylight or fresh air over the course of numerous weeks.[87] Not only were these conditions dark and dreary, but they were also highly unsanitary and unsafe.[88] Nordhausen was an especially brutal concentration camp for prisoners to live and work.

The prisoners' experience at the camp had aged them beyond their years. One liberator found a man who "looked to be seventy-five but was only forty-five."[89] This look of premature aging had been caused by the brutal treatment of their enslavers. One of the living prisoners at

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[83] Monahan and Neidel-Greenlee, *And If I Perish*, 445.

[84] Ibid.

[85] "Dora-Mittelbau/Nordhausen Concentration Camp."

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Hoegh and Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks*, 331.

liberation had explained that "many of the 3,000 dead in the camp had been worked, beaten, and forced at top speed until they could work no longer, after which they were starved off or killed outright."[90] To the SS officers who worked the concentration camps, the prisoners were nothing more than slave laborers. The officers barely kept these men alive and then worked them to the death.

The prisoners' rations were barely enough to survive. One prisoner explained that "their ration was one small loaf of black bread per week for seven men."[91] These miniscule rations explain the skeletal state in which the liberators found the prisoners. Not only did the officers minimize the amount of food they fed to prisoners, but they also disregarded the quality. One liberator walking through the camp noticed "a huge cauldron beside a pile of potatoes. It was evident that a guard had made "soup" for the prisoners by pitch-forking these potatoes into this black pot. To eat this would have been slow poison."[92] The fact that these men survived the concentration camp was a miracle. The SS officers running the camp had stacked the odds of survival against them.

While Nordhausen was a huge concentration camp at its height, the American liberators found only a fraction of the prisoners there at the time of liberation on April 11, 1945. As one liberator explained, when they found Nordhausen, they found a series of tunnels where "some 60,000 prisoners had slaved in them, building the V-1 unmanned radio controlled aircraft and V-2 medium-range ballistic missile used to attack England."[93] According to the Jewish Virtual Library, "once the full production of missiles began in the fall of 1944, Dora-Mittelbau had a

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[90] Ibid., 332.

[91] Ibid., 331.

[92] Ibid., 331.

[93] Hirsch, *The Liberators*, 57.

standing prisoner population of at least 12,000."[94] The camp held at least 12,000 prisoners at one time and enslaved a total of over 60,000 throughout its operation. When the Americans came to liberate the camp, they found only about 6,000 prisoners, 5,000 of whom were corpses.[95] The liberators saw Nordhausen at only about half of its capacity, and were only able to liberate a fraction of all of the prisoners who had worked at the camp.

Part of the reason the liberators found so few prisoners was because the SS had been expecting them. As the SS heard the liberators coming for each concentration camp, they evacuated the camp. They began to evacuate Nordhausen in the beginning of April, 1945 and sent most of the prisoners to Bergen-Belson camp located in northern Germany.[96] These prisoners embarked on death marches from one camp to the next, during which thousands died.[97] When American liberators encountered Nordhausen, they experienced the camp after many of its prisoners had already been evacuated and sent on these grueling death marches. When Father Doyle liberated Nordhausen, the dreadful scene he encountered represented only a fraction of the prisoners who lived and worked at the camp. Despite this fact, the people who Father Doyle ministered to at the liberation had experienced horrors unlike any other. Nordhausen's exceptionally awful conditions impacted the prisoners and the stories they shared with their liberators.

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[94] "Nordhausen (Dora-Mittelbau): History & Overview."

[95] Hoegh and Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks*, 329.

[96] "Nordhausen (Dora-Mittelbau): History & Overview."

[97] Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR

LIBERATION OF NORDHAUSEN

On April 11, 1945, Father Doyle and the Timberwolves liberated Nordhausen concentration camp in Germany. The Timberwolves worked alongside other divisions of the U.S. army to liberate this camp. Each individual had a different experience at this camp. When combined, these experiences offer a more complete picture of what occurred at Nordhausen on April 11, 1945. Furthermore, reading these various experiences allows one to find where Father Doyle fit in to the liberation.

The Timberwolf division of the U.S. Army helped to liberate Nordhausen concentration camp under the command of General Terry Allen on April 11, 1945.[98] A terrifying scene met the soldiers when they liberated this camp. As explained in *Timberwolf Tracks*, the soldiers discovered "5,000 corpses among the 6,000 inmates in various stages of decay. The corpses were scattered throughout the buildings and grounds of the large camp and all of them skeletons wrapped in skin. Most of the bodies apparently lay untouched since death had overtaken them, but some were stacked like cordwood under stairways. In almost all bunkers and buildings the living were found lying among the dead. On one corner was a pile of arms and legs."[99] These

[98] Doyle, "I Was There," 1981.

[99] Hoegh and Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks*, 329.

soldiers encountered one "of the worst-of-the-worst concentration camps" on this day.[100] The ghost town full of corpses was most likely more shocking than any battle scene they had encountered.

Liberating the concentration camp challenged the soldiers in ways that combat did not. As Father Doyle recalled, "the gun and the pursuit of the enemy was dropped and all hands turned to the job here and now… helping the helpless."[101] He witnessed a change of mindset in the Timberwolf soldiers. They were no longer focused on violence and battles. Instead, the soldiers turned their efforts towards rescuing civilians and burying the dead. The soldiers did not work alone. They conscripted "the able-bodied men of the village" to help bury those who died at the camp.[102] Because collecting and burying five thousand corpses was a task too big for the Timberwolves alone, they enlisted the help of those who lived near the camp. These German civilians "denied knowledge of what went on behind the gates of the Nordhausen camp."[103] Whether an honest denial or not, the civilians' experience at the camp liberation forced them to accept the atrocities that were occurring right in their backyards.

The liberation of Nordhausen was a huge task for the Timberwolves, but they succeeded in completing it in less than one week. Father Doyle explained that the division stayed at the camp for just five or six days before being commanded to move on.[104] The liberators may not have been at Nordhausen for long, but their experiences lasted with them for the rest of their lives.

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[100] Hirsch, *The Liberators,* 55.

[101] Doyle, "I Was There," 1981.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid.

Sergeant Ragene Farris worked with the 329th Medical Battalion of the Timberwolves. In *Timberwolf Tracks* he shared the impact that the horrific sights at Nordhausen made upon the liberators. The liberation of Nordhausen kept the medics particularly busy as they attended to the one thousand prisoners who were still living at the camp. Farris explained that he had "grown callous" to the gruesome aspects of his job as an army medic.[105] He and his colleagues were "battle-tired and combat wise medics" who "thought there was nothing left in the books [they] didn't know."[106] However, Farris explained that "in a short period of two days, [he] and many others of the Division saw and lived a story [they] shall never forget" as "for days, weeks, even months afterwards, the word Nordhausen brought [them] a mixed response of emotions."[107] The terrifying scene at Nordhausen affected even the seasoned army medics.

Nothing that the Timberwolves had heard about concentration camps had prepared Farris for what he encountered. He explained that "in a caravan of trucks, we rushed into a job which proved fantastic and unbelievable to an American; a job distasteful and sobering; one created by a fanatical inhuman Nazi machine. We found out the full meaning of the words "Concentration Camp.""[108] The Nazis created such a secretive, inhumane environment. One had to see it to believe it. Farris described the scene as "a sharp sting of reality" as "bombs had ground flesh and bones into the cement floor. Rows upon rows of skin-covered skeletons met [their] eyes. Men lay as they had starved, discolored, and lying in indescribable human filth."[109] The Nazis left their marks on the prisoners as "their striped coats and prison numbers hung to their frames as a last

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[105] Hoegh and Doyle, *Timberwolf Tracks,* 329.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid., 330.

[109] Ibid..

token or symbol of those who enslaved and killed them."[110] The Nazis created a shocking and inhumane environment people could only dream up in nightmares.

The prisoners Farris encountered were incredibly grateful to meet the liberators. He explained that he "saw one man feebly stagger to attention and salute [them] as tears slowly trickled down his cheeks. Too weak to walk, this man was genuinely moved to pay tribute to those who were helping him – showing him the first kind act in years."[111] The liberators' lives were not only changed because of the horrors they experienced, but also because of the impact their actions made on the prisoners they encountered. They inspired deep gratitude and hope in the survivors. Farris shared that he had "never before seen the look in the eyes of these men as they came up for coffee, soup, and various foods prescribed by [their] doctors."[112] The liberators experienced touching moments with the living prisoners amongst the eerie piles of corpses.

As a medic, Farris would have had a similar experience at liberation to Father Doyle. As army chaplain, Father Doyle worked closely with the Medical Battalion.[113] This would have been the case as army chaplains ministered to the sick and dying. One of Father Doyle's roles as a Catholic priest was to perform the sacrament of anointing the sick. Because many of the prisoners were Jewish, Father Doyle may not have been performing this sacrament at liberation; however, he would have been experienced in ministering to people during the final moments of their lives.[114]

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[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid., 332.

[112] Ibid..

[113] Edward P. Doyle, Gunther Plout, and James Livesay, interview by Kathy Solomon, International Liberators Conference, October, 1981, 7.

[114] Although many of the prisoners were Jewish, there were some prisoners who were not Jewish at Nordhausen such as some of the members of the French intelligence or the Nazis political prisoners who would have wanted Father Doyle to perform the sacrament of anointing of the sick for them. In addition, some of the prisoners might have been accused of being Jewish who were not. These prisoners would have appreciated Father Doyle's presence and ability to perform this final sacrament.

Farris's experience as a medic for the Timberwolves offers insight into Father Doyle's experience at liberation.

Major Haynes Dugan's experience at the liberation of Nordhausen is preserved in Michael Hirsch's book *The Liberators: America's Witnesses to the Holocaust.* Dugan was a soldier in the Third Armored Division of the American army who was also a journalist and historian.[115] Dugan preserved much of the history of the division, including their experience at Nordhausen.[116] Dugan's experience was quite similar to that of Sergeant Ragene Farris. He explained the shock that he and his colleagues felt when they first encountered the camp. Dugan claimed that "the Americans couldn't believe their eyes. It is all very well to read of a Maidenek [sic], but no written word can properly convey the atmosphere of such a charnel house, the unbearable stench of decomposing bodies, the sight of live human beings, starved to pallid skeletons, lying cheek to jowl with the ten-day dead."[117] The copious amount of dead bodies found at Nordhausen shocked the liberators when they arrived at the scene. The sight and the smell was nothing they had anticipated. Like the medics of the Timberwolf division, Dugan noted that "although the taking of Nordhausen did not constitute the heaviest fighting of April 11, that city will live forever in the memories of 3rd Armored Division soldiers as a place of horror."[118] The horrors of Nordhausen forever changed the soldiers who liberated the camp.

Hirsch included the experience of a liberator named James in his work. He described James's experience in a section about John Toland's book, *The Last 100 Days: The Tumultuous*

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[115] Third Armored Division Foundation, "The Writings of Haynes W. Dugan, Lt. Col., USAR (ret): 3AD Hq. Asst. G-2 & Div. Public Affairs Officer, WWII," http://www.3ad.com/history/wwll/dugan.index.htm.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Hirsch, *The Liberators,* 56.

[118] Ibid.

and Controversial Story of the Final Days of World War II in Europe. James experienced a different emotion than some of the other liberators. Whereas many liberators described the shock they felt upon encountering Nordhausen, James described his anger. James's platoon went to Nordhausen to search for engineering materials that they could use for roads or bridges. When he got there, James saw that "German civilians were breaking open the railroad cars and looting what was in them. [He remembered] seeing one that had bags of sugar and the people were fighting over that."[119] This sight disturbed James. He stated that "all I know is that I did not have emotional reactions except hate. How the hell can people do this?"[120] James directed his anger towards the German civilians who claimed they did not know what was happening at the camp. He hated to see them looting from the camp after they had sat idly by letting their leaders brutally enslave and kill their fellow citizens. He explained: "that's the thing that pissed me off so much, was that there were people looting. Of course, they didn't have anything to eat, either. But they knew, they knew what was down there. You could smell it."[121] James did not accept the German citizen's denial of the camps. The acrid smell of the dying was too obvious to him to believe otherwise.

Historians Evelyn Monahan and Rosemary Neidel-Greenlee published *And If I Persish: Frontline U. S. Army Nurses in World War II*. The book is an account of nurses' experiences liberating concentration camps, including the experiences of nurses from the Third Armored Division at Nordhausen's liberation. These nurses communicated a similar shock to that of Farris and Dugan. Monahan and Neidel-Greenlee describe the experience of Lieutenant Martha Nash of the forty-fourth evacuation hospital after she "was transferred to the outskirts of Nordhausen."[122]

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[119] Ibid., 59.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Monahan and Neidel-Greenlee, *And If I Perish,* 446.

The authors illustrated her reaction: "on 16 April, Nash asked to be shown around the prison camp. Nothing she had seen during twelve months of service on the front lines had prepared her for what she was about to witness."[123] This woman had spent a year treating soldiers in battle, but none of those horrors compared to those she found at Nordhausen. The division found "hundreds of corpses … sprawled over the acres of the big compound. More hundreds filled the great barracks. They lay in contorted heaps, half stripped, mouths gaping in the dirt and straw."[124] The nurses of the division were not prepared for the number of dead bodies they encountered.

The living prisoners' conditions were not much better than those of the dead. They described the men as "nothing more than living skeletons, bones covered with a thin sheet of almost translucent skin."[125] The Division's medical officer "predicted that even with immediate medical attention, only about half of these victims, so severely starved and gravely ill, would survive."[126] The devastating conditions of the living prisoners is most likely due to the fact that when the Nazis evacuated the camp, they left behind those who were not well enough to keep working at a new camp.

Father Doyle's Point of View

Father Doyle shared his experience at Nordhausen in his speech "I Was There" at the International Liberator's Conference of 1981. The Providence College student-run Newspaper, *The Cowl*, published the speech in February of 1997 after he shared it at a Providence College event entitled "Bearing Witness: A Day of Holocaust Awareness." English Professor Jane Lunin

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid., 444.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

Perel's class, "Gender and Genocide: Studies in Literature of the Holocaust," organized this event in the Fall 1996 semester.[127] In "I Was There," Father Doyle described what he encountered at the liberation of Nordhausen.

Father Doyle experienced the same horrors as many of the other liberators. He explained that "the division stepped into a world difficult to describe, although many have tried to do so but fail. It was a world of horror, tragedy…a concentration camp!"[128] Father Doyle could not even find the words to describe the horrors he experienced at the camp. He continued to share "further evidence of the inhumanity of man and his cruelty" when he ran across the V-1 and V-2 bomb factory.[129] Father Doyle explained that "it was the same workers [who] worked unfed until they dropped and then were abandoned and died and were cremated. Such a scene of horror!"[130] Father Doyle was overcome by the inhumanity he witnessed.

Father Doyle was filled with emotion when he encountered the prisoners at the camp. He recalled that he "had witnessed a sinister, brutal, and utter disregard of human dignity."[131] The prisoners were not identified as people. Father Doyle shared that "every sixth rank carried no name, rank, or serial number but the poignant words, "Unknown but to God.""[132] The camps had stripped the prisoners of their identities. Only God knew them. On Earth they had become nothing

[127] Father Doyle, "I Was There."

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Ibid.

more than corpses. He encountered piles of unidentifiable prisoners so thin that they resembled skeletons and so numerous that they shocked the liberators.[133]

As an army chaplain, Father Doyle worked closely with the living prisoners found at Nordhausen. He explained that "as it was my want during combat, I stationed myself at the Regimental forward aid station to be of assistance to all my men."[134] Father Doyle shared the same opinion of numerous other liberators that the horrors of Nordhausen were unprecedented in his wartime experience. He claimed that "I had seen as many as 125 wounded a night in our combat area of Belgium and Holland and assisted in preparing the wounded for surgery and the like but never had I seen such suffering and anguish."[135] The prisoners at Nordhausen felt a unique pain that no injured combat soldier could match. Unlike the soldiers, the prisoners were not enemies because they volunteered to fight in a war to defend their country; to the Nazis, the prisoners were enemies because of how they were born and raised. Father Doyle explained that the chaplains "offered special prayers and fulfilled the rituals of [the prisoners'] faith as victims of hatred were placed in now hallowed ground."[136] He worked with these prisoners in vulnerable states and recognized the deep pain and suffering they experienced.

Father Doyle had a special purpose at Nordhausen during liberation. He explained that "if I ever needed a reason for my having left the classroom at Providence College to join the combat troops as a spiritual advisor and priest it was at the scene of horror! It was at Nordhausen and the subsequent scenes of cruelty, the wholesale ignoring of the Judeo-Christian tradition … namely,

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[133] See Figures 2 through 5 for a selection of Father Doyle's Photographs

[134] Father Doyle, "I Was There."

[135] Ibid.

[136] Ibid.

love God and love your neighbor that it all had a meaning."[137] Father Doyle was meant to be at Nordhausen that day to minister to prisoners in a place where people had so blatantly disregarded his faith. As chaplain, he brought God to a place where He was previously ignored. Because Father Doyle could not find the words to describe his experience adequately, he resorted to photographs to capture better the inhumanity he witnessed. The fact that Father Doyle thought to capture his experience in this fashion speaks to his personality and defines his unique reaction to Nordhausen's liberation.

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[137] Ibid.

CHAPTER FIVE

FATHER DOYLE'S REACTION: THE INTERVIEW, THE PHOTOGRAPHS, & THE RECOGNITION

After the liberation, Father Doyle documented his experience at Nordhausen through photographs and stories. Through each speech, interview, and conversation, Father Doyle shared how he reacted to the events that he witnessed. As time passed, he tried to make sense of his experience and to understand further the Holocaust. Father Doyle's reaction deeply reflects his religious beliefs as a Dominican Friar.

Interview

Father Doyle was an internationally recognized liberator. At the International Liberators Conference, a woman named Kathy Solomon of Emory University interviewed Father Doyle along with Rabbi Gunther Plout who ministered to the Jewish soldiers of the Timberwolf Division, and James Livesay who was a soldier in the division.[138] All three individuals were involved in the liberation of Nordhausen. The three men shared what they remembered most about their experiences years later. Father Doyle admitted that he was "vague on some little things" so sharing the interview with others who were there with him helped to give a more complete picture of the

[138] Doyle interviewed by Solomon, 3, 5, 7.

experience.[139] Livesay remembered the sick feeling he felt when he encountered the thousands of corpses.[140] The young soldier, only twenty years old at the time of Liberation, became physically ill, but knew that he had to fulfill his duty at that time.[141] The experience took a toll on all of the liberators. They witnessed atrocities most people could only imagine in nightmares.

Rabbi Plout, on the other hand, had a very different reaction as a Jewish man. He recalled the fellowship that the living prisoners at the camp felt with him when they spotted the Jewish star on his chaplain's flag.[142] He shared that "there were people who came up and kissed my feet. I mean, it was the most humiliating thing to me that there would be human beings who would put me in a position which I most certainly didn't deserve."[143] As a Rabbi, the scenes especially affected Plout as he witnessed the immense hatred that was displayed against his people.

The three liberators remembered their strange experience burying the dead. They had employed the help of the townspeople, or the "bergers" as the men refer to them in the interview, and asked them to dress in their "Sunday best" because they were going to a funeral.[144] Of course, these civilians all claimed that they knew nothing of the events happening in the camp and were reluctant to dig mass graves in their dress clothes.[145] The soldiers did not have enough shovels for everyone to use, so the diggers used their own spades and spoons to dig the graves.[146] The soldiers

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[139] Ibid., 14.

[140] Ibid., 10.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Ibid., 11-12.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid., 13.

[145] Ibid.

[146] Ibid..

then asked the people to bury the dead with their own hands.[147] The civilian's aloofness clearly frustrated some of the liberators at Nordhausen. After the soldiers enlisted the townspeople to help, the civilians could no longer deny the events that had occurred nearby.

In reflecting on his experience at Nordhausen, Father Doyle tried to understand why the events had even taken place. He tried to get to the root of the problem by questioning "why does man do these things, why the inhumanity to fellow human beings?"[148] He was deeply troubled by what he witnessed. As a man who dedicated his life to his faith, Father Doyle reflected on what this inhumanity said about his religion and God. He came to the conclusion that "the Holocaust was the tragic failure of man."[149] Father Doyle reconciled his faith in the all-loving God with the horrendous events he witnessed by recognizing man as the responsible party for the Holocaust. He explained the Holocaust as man's doing, not God's, and asserted that at this time "we need God more than ever."[150] God granted humanity free will, and therefore man has possibilities for both vice and virtue. The Holocaust has proven that man has more possibilities for vices.[151] The men responsible for the Holocaust abused God's gift of free will to humanity by turning their backs on Him and intentionally harming an entire population of people.

Father Doyle emphasized the importance of loving one another in response to these events. He explained that "one is forced to reiterate the need for educating people to the need of unanimity and cooperation. Surely the vastness of man's inhumanity to men can convey to the mind the wisdom of sound theology and its application in our daily lives. Men may disagree, but that does

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[147] Ibid., 14.

[148] Father Doyle, "I Was There."

[149] Doyle Interviewed by Solomon, 19.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

not destroy charity and love for each other."[152] Father Doyle believed that faith was the answer to the inhumanity. He wanted people to remember all of the good that men can do for each other. People should not let their differences divide them, rather their differences should bring them together. Father Doyle believed that this unanimity and faithfulness could prevent another genocide. He shared that "having seen the barbaric ravages of hatred, and the parallel need of love of mankind, cannot our closing prayer be a fervent plea to Almighty God that our actions be a dedication and an accepted responsiveness of ever seeking out avenues of peace among all nations, and in such pursuits may we be God's willing and effective instruments? May God strengthen our resolve to work diligently to remove any likelihood of another genocide, the tragic consequence of the failure of man."[153] Reflecting on the Holocaust did not jeopardize Father Doyle's faith.[154] He emphasized the importance of balancing the study of the Holocaust with hope. For "if you abandon hope you abandon all that your human spirit really strives for."[155] In the true spirit of Saint Dominic, Father Doyle's faith proved strong and steadfast as he maintained his hope and turned to God to help mankind during this time of hatred and suffering.

Photographs

The photographs that Father Doyle took at Nordhausen embody the actual horror he witnessed. He explained that "my photographs speak a thousand words for the wholesale slaughter and slow deaths which was not restricted to men, but to women and children also."[156] Father

[152] Father Doyle, "I Was There."

[153] Ibid.

[154] Doyle Interviewed by Solomon, 20.

[155] Perel, interviewed by Michels.

[156] Father Doyle, "I Was There."

Doyle used the camera the military provided to him to capture his experience at Nordhausen. The result was a series of horrendous images that depict the immense death and destruction that the Nazis inflicted on their political prisoners and the Jewish population. All who saw these images felt the gravity of the scene Father Doyle witnessed. The former Providence College archivist, Jane Jackson, referred to the photographs as the "soul" of Father Doyle's archive.[157] They were so powerful that they brought the collection to life, conveying the power of Father Doyle's experience at Nordhausen to the viewer.

Recognition

When Father Doyle returned home from Germany, he went back to his normal life prior to the war teaching theology at Providence College.[158] He shared his experience at the International Liberators Conference in 1981, at Providence College's "Bearing Witness" event in 1996, and permanently in the Providence College Archives thanks to the efforts of Jane Lunin Perel, with whom Father Doyle left his photographs and papers. During Providence College's centennial celebrations in 2017, one of Father Doyle's former colleagues, Jane Lunin Perel, along with others, organized an event celebrating Father Doyle and his experience as a liberator at Nordhausen. This event highlighted Father Doyle's insightful reaction to what he witnessed in Germany.

Current professor of Theology at Providence College, Arthur Urbano, shared Father Doyle's spiritual reaction to the Holocaust. He believed that Father Doyle's "reflections on the horrors that human sinfulness can carry out" carry a sense of hopefulness.[159] He recognized that

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[157] Jane Jackson, letter to Father Doyle, September 11, 1996.

[158] "Information Sheet About Father Doyle."

[159] Arthur Urbano, Remarks given at "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34 – Dominican Liberator," Providence College, April 8, 2017.

Father Doyle did not blame God, but that he saw God present in those who were suffering.[160] Father Doyle did not believe that God could have been at fault for the Holocaust because he saw God present in the prisoners at Nordhausen.

Deborah Johnson, current professor of Modern Art History at Providence College, reflected on Father Doyle's human reaction to the Holocaust. She recognized Father Doyle as "a human being with a call to a higher mission calling upon this example of humans at their worst moments" and that he "responded as a human being who was moved and ultimately tormented by what he saw."[161] Throughout his life, the scenes that Father Doyle witnessed at Nordhausen deeply troubled him. He tried to make sense of the effects of hatred he saw on the thousands of prisoners. Johnson understood Father Doyle's reflections in the context of his own humanity trying to understand other humans at their lowest moments.

In the fall of 1996, Father Doyle gave Jane Lunin Perel, professor of English at Providence College, his archival materials with the expressed wish that "everyone who came to the [Providence] college should know about the Holocaust."[162] Father Doyle wanted his experience to be documented and remembered. In photographing what he witnessed and sharing it with others, Father Doyle ensured that his experience would outlast him. Even after he died and was no longer able to share his story and reactions himself, Father Doyle guaranteed that there would be people who could share his story for him. In the true spirit of the Order of Preachers, Father Doyle wanted to spread his news so that all could learn from and share in his experience.

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[160] Urbano, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."

[161] Deborah Johnson, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."

[162] Johnson, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."; Perel interviewed by Michels.

CHAPTER SIX

WHY WAS FATHER DOYLE'S REACTION UNIQUE?

Father Doyle reacted to his experience at Nordhausen's liberation differently than many of his colleagues. While many questioned God, Father Doyle's faith only grew stronger. Many of the ways Father Doyle responded to these events are in line with his Dominican Charism. His beliefs and values as a member of the Order of Preachers influenced the way in which Father Doyle remembered the Holocaust.

During their interview at the International Liberators Conference, interviewer Kathy Solomon asked Father Doyle and Rabbi Plout, as two "men of the cloth," about how witnessing the events of the Holocaust affected their faiths.[163] While Father Doyle's faith grew, Rabbi Plout's faith suffered. He admitted that his "faith was severely tried at that time" and that he "asked questions we sometimes don't like to ask."[164] Rabbi Plout, as a man who dedicated his life to his faith, questioned God after liberating Nordhausen. He later became a theologian precisely to find answers to his questions.[165] He came to the conclusion that he must adopt a "different conception of God."[166] Unlike Father Doyle, Rabbi Plout could not accept that man was the only responsible

[163] Doyle Interviewed by Solomon, 19.

[164] Ibid., 21.

[165] Ibid..

[166] Ibid.

party for the Holocaust. He believed that "God, too, shared a measure of responsibility – not for killing, obviously, but His responsibility is and was that He gave us the freedom to decide."[167] Father Doyle believed that what humans decided to do with their free will was their own responsibility, not God's. On the contrary, Rabbi Plout believed that because God gave humans this free will, He was partially responsible for the decisions humans made under their freedom. Rabbi Plout supported his belief with a reference to the book of Genesis in which God looks at the violence of humans and says He is sorry that He created it.[168] According to Rabbi Plout, just as God was responsible for the violence of the human race that He created in Genesis, God was responsible for the choices that the Nazis made in the Holocaust against the Jews.

During the interview with Solomon, Rabbi Plout also shared his opinion on the origin of the Holocaust. He recognized that many view the Final Solution as a "vicious expression of hatred by a centuries-old dislike of the Jews, which was preached certainly in the medieval church."[169] As Rabbi Plout stated, most scholars believe that this was a contributing factor, but he believed that "the guilt was certainly not with the churches."[170] He saw antisemitism as a "disease" and he believed that it is up to religious institutions to eliminate it.[171] According to Rabbi Plout, the Holocaust was caused by the rampant antisemitism that existed in Germany at the time that the Nazis rose to power.

Rabbi Plout shared anecdotes from his childhood as a Jew in Germany to illustrate how ingrained antisemitism was in German culture. He explained that he "grew up with students and

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[167] Ibid.

[168] Ibid., 21-22.

[169] Ibid., 26.

[170] Ibid.

[171] Ibid.

teachers around [him] who were taught from childhood that Jews were inferior and that whatever punishment would come to them for the killing of Christ, they deserved."[172] Much of the "centuries-old dislike of the Jews" originated in the idea that the Jews were responsible for the death of Christ. Rabbi Plout claimed that "enough of my teachers and fellow students believed it to make my childhood in school very uncomfortable."[173] He shared stories of one student who used to hit him and curse him for being a Jew when the teacher left the room while the other students stood idly by.[174] Rabbi Plout fell victim to the antisemitism that was prevalent in Germany while he was growing up. For him, it was this environment full of hatred that allowed the Holocaust to occur.

Elie Wiesel was a survivor of Buchenwald, the camp of which Nordhausen was formerly a part. Wiesel organized the International Liberators Conference at which Solomon interviewed Father Doyle, Rabbi Plout, and Livesay. His experience at Buchenwald greatly challenged his faith to the point where he lost his faith in God. In his memoir about his experience during the Holocaust, *Night*, Wiesel described how his faith diminished to nothing by the end of his imprisonment. He wrote in his memoir: "never shall I forget those flames that consumed my faith forever./ … Never shall I forget those moments that murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to ashes."[175] God was completely dead in Wiesel's eyes. Wiesel took Rabbi Plout's questioning of God to the extreme and lost all faith in Him. He shared his struggles with prayer as he said "how could I say to Him: Blessed be Thou, Almighty, Master of the Universe, who chose us among all nations to be tortured by day and night, to watch as our fathers, our mothers,

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[172] Ibid., 27.

[173] Ibid..

[174] Ibid., 27-28.

[175] Wiesel, *Night*, 34.

our brothers end up in the furnaces?"[176] Wiesel had trouble praying to a God who allowed so much pain and suffering to himself and his loved ones. He described an experience in the camp in which: "my eyes opened and I was alone, terribly alone in a world without God, without man."[177] Wiesel had not seen God protect or rescue his people. He did not see God anywhere in his life, or in the world at large. Wiesel's experience during the Holocaust caused him to completely lose his faith.[178]

While Rabbi Plout and Wiesel's faith suffered after experiencing the effects of the Holocaust, Livesay's faith actually grew stronger. James Livesay was the Timberwolf soldier who Kathy Solomon interviewed alongside Father Doyle and Rabbi Plout at the International Liberators Conference. He recalled calling upon God to give him the strength to go on and do his duty as a liberator at Nordhausen.[179] Instead of turning away from God in witnessing the inhumanity of the Holocaust, Livesay turned towards Him for help. Livesay's experience at Nordhausen impacted his faith for the rest of his life. He shared that "since that time, I haven't questioned God because we don't know what His plans are for us."[180] Livesay's reaction to what he saw at Nordhausen more closely mirrors that of Father Doyle who maintained a strong faith in light of the inhumanity he witnessed.

Father Doyle's reactions to his experience at Nordhausen greatly reflected his Dominican charism. Saint Dominic's contemporaries admired him for his steadfast character and his

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[176] Ibid., 67.

[177] Ibid., 68.

[178] Wiesel published *Night* in the 1950s, within a decade after the end of World War II. Since writing his memoir, Wiesel had regained his faith prior to his death in 2016. However, his initial reaction to the Holocaust was the loss of his previously strong faith.

[179] Doyle Interviewed by Solomon, 20.

[180] Ibid..

unwavering faith. Father Doyle emulated the spirit of Saint Dominic in his own steadfast faith throughout the experience, his urge to spread the news of what he witnessed, the emphasis on memory and community in what he shared with the world, and his love for people of all faiths. He explained the importance of following "your own faith in the face of painful memories" in the speech he delivered at the International Liberators Conference.[181] He preached the importance of following your faith even when it is difficult. When asked about Hitler's motivation for his final solution, he replied that "the final solution cannot be right for anybody because we are all human beings. We are all God's children – because we came from God, we're going back to God."[182] He trusted that God was watching over His children during the Final Solution. He asserted that all of the Jews who were killed were sent back to God. He trusted in the goodness of the Lord and His forgiving nature when he explained that "God is once again patient and gave us a second chance."[183] He trusted that the Lord knows that His creation is not perfect, but that he gives people second chances. Father Doyle built upon this belief and said "I would answer that there is no final solution other than the fact that God wants everyone to achieve salvation."[184] Even at a time when Father Doyle witnessed human beings committing heinous crimes against humanity, he believed in the goodness of his God and God's desire for the wellbeing of all humanity.

Those who knew Father Doyle at Providence College spoke about his strong faith years after his experience at Nordhausen. His obituary states that "members of the PC community who knew Father Doyle emphasized his compassionate nature. He was good, kind, sympathetic,

[181] Father Doyle, "I Was There."

[182] Doyle Interviewed by Solomon, 24.

[183] Ibid., 25.

[184] Ibid.

humble, and prayerful, they recalled."[185] Father Doyle left a similar impact on those who knew him at Providence College as Saint Dominic left on his friends, followers, and acquaintances. Both men remained strong in their faith even during times when their faith was challenged. Father Doyle's Dominican charism influenced how he reacted as a man of faith to the events he witnessed at Nordhausen. His steadfastness was not a result of his position as a leader in faith, as Rabbi Plout was also a leader in his own religion and he questioned God during this difficult time. Father Doyle's steadfastness was an embodiment of his Dominican charism.

As the Order of Preachers, the Dominicans value spreading their knowledge to the masses. Father Doyle embodied this value in his efforts to document the event that he witnessed and share it with others so that all would know the atrocities of the Holocaust. In 1996, just a few months before he passed away in 1997, Father Doyle handed Holocaust Literature professor Perel an Ambassador candy box full of his photos and papers from his time in the army.[186] When she asked Father Doyle why he was giving these documents to her, he said "I want you to take everything from here and I want you to find a public space for it so that everyone at Providence College knows the Holocaust happened."[187] Father Doyle knew the importance of his documents and he wanted to share their educational potential with his alma mater.

Father Doyle believed in the importance of speaking up and sharing the experiences of those who lived through and witnessed the events of the Holocaust. He quoted Elie Wiesel saying "unless we remember in good faith and in sincerity in the very depths of our being, we must not speak. But speak we must."[188] He believed that survivors and witnesses should speak up about

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[185] King, "Community Mourns Loss of Dominican Liberator."

[186] Perel, interviewed by Michels.

[187] Ibid.

[188] Father Doyle quoting Elie Wiesel, "I Was There."

their experiences and share their knowledge. In his efforts to spread the word, Father Doyle explained that "our goal was to expose the large-scale evil of the Holocaust in an educational fashion."[189] The Dominican Friars preach to educate the world on their beliefs. In sharing what he witnessed at Nordhausen, Father Doyle aimed to educate the world about the Holocaust and what was happening behind the gates of the concentration camps. As former Providence College student, Michael Murray, with whom Father Doyle was close, stated: "it was of paramount importance to Father Doyle that the world know what he witnessed during his service."[190] He wanted to share the knowledge that he gained about the evils of the Holocaust with the world so that everyone could know what he knew. Father Doyle's efforts were especially important as even in 1981, decades after World War II had ended, there were "still people who believe[d] that Hitler didn't exist at all."[191] Survivors and liberators needed to tell their stories to change the minds of Holocaust deniers. Father Doyle had an innate desire to spread the word in the true spirit of the Order of Preachers.

Father Doyle consciously made his decision to share his experience. In her speech about Father Doyle, Deborah Johnson mentioned that the soldiers at Nordhausen were given Polaroid cameras to record what they saw. She further explained that Father Doyle had the presence of mind to take the photographs that he did, which says something about Father Doyle himself.[192] He wanted to keep record of what he saw so that he could share it with others. As explained in Chapter Five, he captured a scene of horror that left an impact on all who viewed them. Father

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[189] Father Doyle, "I Was There."

[190] Michael Murray, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."

[191] Shribman, "Holocaust Survivors Hold Reunion With Liberators."

[192] Johnson, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."

Doyle did not want to keep his experience to himself, just as Saint Dominic did not want to keep his experience of faith to himself.

Currently one of the primary audiences of Father Doyle's experience is the Providence College community as these are the people to whom Father Doyle left his photographs and papers. This was not always the case. World War II ended in 1945, but as Murray recalled, Father Doyle was only able to share his experiences with the PC community shortly before his death in 1997.[193] Murray was referring to the "Bearing Witness" event his Holocaust literature class organized in the fall semester of 1996, just a few months before Father Doyle's death. Jane Lunin Perel, the professor of the class who organized the event, shared: "I realized I was sitting beside an eyewitness who'd had the strength and wisdom to take these photos… He said … he wanted them on permanent display at PC so the people here at the college would know that this had really happened."[194] Father Doyle wanted to share his memories with his Providence College community so that they would not be forgotten. As explained at the Providence College centennial event remembering Father Doyle, he wanted a public place where the pictures would always be visible so everyone who comes to the college knows that the Holocaust happened.[195] After Father Doyle's death in 1997, "college archivist [Jane] Jackson received the materials from Perel" and "they have been displayed annually to coincide with the global Yom Hashoah commemoration [Holocaust Remembrance Day], and are available for use by college faculty and students studying the Holocaust."[196] The Providence College archivist granted Father Doyle's wish and his experience of the Holocaust is shared annually with the whole college community. Regarding his donation to

[193] Murray, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."

[194] Carcieri, "A Priest Vows Never to Forget."

[195] Jane Lunin Perel, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."

[196] Carcieri, "A Priest Vows Never to Forget."

the archives, Jackson stated that "the photographs taken at Nordhausen are obviously the soul of the collection" and that "although the number of pieces is small, the emotional impact is huge."[197] Father Doyle's experience impacted, and continues to impact, the hearts and minds of the Providence College community. As one student stated, "in this man, we found a heroic testimony to the Dominican mission of courage, service, and the ultimate faith in the greatness of God."[198] Father Doyle's Dominican desire to spread the word deeply affected the individuals of his community.

Father Doyle emulated the Dominican value of community in sharing his experience at Nordhausen. As Father Brian Shanley, O.P., current President of Providence College, explained at the centennial event for Father Doyle, the theme of the event was memory, and the importance of memory for communities.[199] Father Shanley shared that this communal value of memories is something that "we, as Christians, have learned from our Jewish brothers and sisters."[200] He explained that memories give a community their identity.[201] The memory of the Holocaust that Father Doyle helped to preserve is part of the Jewish community's identity. Father Shanley shared that the military period of Father Doyle's life was formative for him and that he carried the

[197] Jane Jackson, letter to Father Doyle, September 11, 1996.

[198] Alexis Rochefort, "I Was There: The Moving Testimony of Providence College's Father Edward P. Doyle O.P., Ph.D," *The Cowl*, Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Digital Publishing Services, February 6, 1997.

[199] Father Brian Shanley, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."

[200] Ibid.

[201] Ibid.

memories from the war with him.[202] In fact, these memories impacted Father Doyle so much that he preferred to be called Major Doyle even after his time of military service was over.[203]

The prisoners in the camps also used memory to build community amongst themselves as they suffered together. Jane Lunin Perel shared the story of the cookbook, "From Memory's Kitchen," which the women prisoners compiled in the camps to combat hunger.[204] The women shared the recipes and memories of cooking Jewish food with their mothers as they lived in a constant state of hunger in the camp.[205] These women came together as a community and used memories to survive. Father Doyle's shared memory as a liberator ties into both the Jewish and Dominican values of community.

Further, in valuing the memories of the Jewish community, Father Doyle emulated Saint Dominic's spirit of loving people of all faiths. In fact, Father Doyle "received the "Never Again Award" from the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island for striving to "reduce antisemitism, racism, and prejudiced attitudes.""[206] Father Doyle changed the lives of people of all faiths through his compassion and love for all people, Catholic or not. The Jewish Federation of Rhode Island recognized this trait of his and rewarded him for it. Father Doyle's obituary further recognized his role as a Dominican liberator, as it states that "Father Doyle's experience stands not only as a testament to one of the most horrible tragedies of the twentieth century, but also as an example of

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[202] Ibid.

[203] Ibid.

[204] Perel, "Celebration of Reverend Edward P. Doyle, O.P. '34."

[205] Ibid.

[206] Dea Antonelli Carcieri, "Photographic Exhibit: "A Priest Vows Never to Forget,"" Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Digital Publishing Services.

how selflessly he gave to others throughout his life."[207] In the true spirit of the Dominicans, Father Doyle showed his love to people of all faiths in his efforts to preserve the memory of the Holocaust.

[207] King, "Community Mourns Loss of Dominican Liberator."

CONCLUSION

Father Doyle's story provides an important perspective on the Holocaust. He was able to reconcile the goodness of God with the evil potentials of His creation. As other liberators have shared their reactions to what they encountered at Nordhausen, Father Doyle offered his reflections and insights on what he saw. Unlike many others, he trusted in God's goodness based on the idea that the Holocaust was the failure of man, not of God. This perspective offered hope to any believers in God who may have struggled with their faith after seeing the horrors that the Nazis commit against a group of God's faithful followers. Father Doyle showed a deep compassion for the Jewish people as he valued the importance of sharing the story of the Holocaust. He wanted everyone to know that the Holocaust occurred and worked hard to share this story on behalf of the Jewish people.

Father Doyle's perspective is unique because his story is told from the Dominican perspective. The charism of the Order of Preachers is prevalent through his actions during and after Nordhausen's liberation. His steadfastness in faith mirrored that of Saint Dominic, even in a time as trying as the Holocaust. His inclination to record what he witnessed at Nordhausen and share his experience exemplified the Dominican spirit of preaching. His efforts to preserve the memories of the Holocaust helped strengthen the Jewish community, emphasizing the Dominican value of community. His love and care for the Jewish people as a liberator and for non-Catholics as army chaplain exhibited Saint Dominic's love and compassion for people of all faiths.

All those who study Father Doyle can learn about how the Dominican reacts to acts of inhumanity. In exposing the evils of the Holocaust, Father Doyle' story offers faith-filled hope to all who have experienced atrocities and suffering as he trusts that events like the Holocaust are the failures of man, not of God.

For decades Providence College knew very little about Father Doyle. He left the college in 1954 to work at Seton Hill College and did not return until 1987. Although he was living at the priory on campus, a large portion of the Providence College community had no idea who Father Doyle was, nor his important experiences as a Holocaust liberator.[208] Only recently has Providence College begun to recognize the full potential of Father Doyle's knowledge and perspective. As Jane Lunin Perel states, "Father Doyle embodies everything that a hero really is," and it is time for the Providence College community to learn from him.[209] This man could have donated his photographs and papers to the United States National Holocaust Memorial Museum, but instead he said "this is for Providence College. It is important for me that everyone who comes to this college knows that the Holocaust happened. That is what I want."[210] Father Doyle gave students so much more than just a knowledge of the Holocaust when he donated his documents to the college. He taught students about the importance of hope in times of struggle, speaking in times of silence, faith in times of horror, and kindness to others in the face of diversity, just as Saint Dominic preached.

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[208] Perel, interview with Michels.

[209] Ibid.

[210] Ibid.

APPENDIX

Figure 1:

"Portrait of Reverend Edward P. Doyle." September, 1943. Providence College Archives.

Figure 2:

Father Edward P. Doyle O. P. "Executed prisoners lined up on the ground." April 12, 1945. Nordhausen, Germany.

Figure 3:

Father Edward P. Doyle O. P. "Executed prisoners lined up on the ground and building ruins." April 12, 1945. Nordhausen, Germany.

Figure 4:

Father Edward P. Doyle O. P. "Close up of executed prisoners." April 12, 1945. Nordhausen, Germany.

Figure 5:

Father Edward P. Doyle O. P. "Executed prisoners lined up on the ground and building ruins." April 12, 1945. Nordhausen, Germany.

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