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FR. DRESSSEL TO LEAVE SLUH; SEARCH COMMITTEE FORMED

Fr. Leo P. Dressel, the principal of St. Louis University High School since January 9, 1979, has announced that he will resign this position sometime during the summer of 1983 bringing to an end a four and a half year tenure that he describes as "a very enriching and interesting part of my life." This announcement of his leaving, made first in letter form to the members of the St. Louis U. High Board of Trustees, Wednesday, January 19, and then to the faculty the next day, came as the result of a request from Fr. David L. Fleming, the Provincial of the Missouri Province, that Fr. Dressel complete his Jesuit tertianship during the 1983-84 academic year. In the letter to the Board, Fr. Dressel stated that he chose to announce his leaving early enough so that "there will be adequate time for the Board and Provincial to choose a successor." No specific time has been established for the transition, but it will be no later than mid July.

In their search for SLUH's new principal, the Board has organized a special committee, headed by Fr. McCabe and made up of two trustees, two alumni, two teachers, one parent, and one student. Religiously, the provincial will approve the new principal, but the Board will actually do the choosing, approving, and ratifying of the final decision.

The story of Fr. Dressel's beginnings as principal
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LOOKING BACK, FR. DRESSSEL SEES SOME HUMOR IN IT ALL

A man who sees more of what goes on than students realize, Fr. Dressel has certainly had his funny-bone hit more than once.

He thinks back to last year when, to celebrate the end of their "career
CONT'D NEXT COLUMN

at SLUH," the class of '82 shedded corduroys and stan-nis shoes for shorts and bare feet to stage a volleyball game and to throw several innocent bystanders into a small inflatable pool.

CONT'D NEXT COLUMN

HUMOROUS CONTINUED

Another memorable trend was the mallard hat, also made stylish by last year's seniors. The hat was cut only from the finest plastic duck decoys that Grandpa Pigeons sells and was worn as standard basketball game attire. "That two guys got jugged for wearing them ensured that it would become popular; but when the teachers wore the hats in the faculty pep rally, that killed it." Fr. Dressel said he pictured, "some poor guy who had just been fired for ordering a thousand extra duck decoys that would only collect dust."

Though the admissions process is always taken very seriously by the applicants, the principal recalls one eighth-grader who filled out a form asking for first and second choice schools with SLUH first and Death as his second choice. He also recalls phone calls from concerned mothers: one who inquired about her 4-month old son's chances of getting into SLUH and another who, tho she lived in West County,
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FR. DRESSSEL LEAVING SLUH CONTINUED

here at SLUH is, to say the least, interesting. When he arrived here in September of 1978 for his apostolate, it was planned for Fr. Dressel to "train" as an administrator for about 2 years, and then go from there. That plan was soon put away when Fr. Ralph Houlihan, SLUH's principal, and Fr. Joe Snyder, assistant principal were sent to Regis High School in Denver and Fr. Dressel was chosen to be the new principal of SLUH at the very young age of 31. Fr. Cummings made his feelings known about the whole situation when he jokingly commented, "They only go with the young ones when there is a proven history of excellence."

During his four and a half years as the principal of SLUH, Fr. Dressel has achieved many accomplishments, important not only to him but to the entire SLUH community. As Fr. Cummings put it, "Every principal brings some contribution to a school. By his sheer age, Fr. Dressel brought a youthful energy to SLUH along with a sense of high expectation." That sense was made a reality in the form of SLUH's new admissions policy which, as Fr. Dressel stated, "humanizes the admissions process because more than just grades and test scores are involved." Another contribution that Fr. Dressel brought to SLUH was the idea of Freshman Direction Days. Father feels that "the program is an excellent way to introduce the entering students to the real spirit and community which is SLUH." The preparations for the North Central committee's evaluation of SLUH last year, which Fr. Dressel spearheaded, was the most evident way that he was able to contribute his talents to SLUH. As Fr. Dressel put it, "We could have let the whole thing slide, but instead I decided to use the evaluation productively as an unbiased, objective critique."

Fr. Dressel's "tertianship" is the last of a three part education in becoming a Jesuit. The first period involves early training, vows, formal education and ordination; the second, known as the apostolate period, involves the priest in one of a variety of activities—for Fr. Dressel, administrative work. Tertianship is the last part in which a priest spends time contemplating past, present, and future—a time to reassess and to plan for the rest of his life.

Commenting on his feelings about his whole experience while principal of SLUH, Fr. Dressel admitted that "the job was intimidating at first", but went on to say that "the cooperation and help my fellow administrators, the faculty, and students have given me has made the experience of being a principal very rewarding." Father also stated, "I feel I am doing a better job now than in the beginning because my relationship with the students has improved and I have gradually learned to enjoy my work." In the end, although Fr. Dressel thinks that the change is good for both him and SLUH, he emphasized that, "I could never completely sever my ties from this school."

—Jay Buhr

HUMOROUS CONT'D

was anxious about her son's daily journey through "downtown". "But our school is west of downtown," was Father Dressel's reply. The mother, it turned out, was actually worried about the ride through Clayton.

Perhaps, in the mind of Fr. Dressel, the funniest event in the arch-rivalry between CBC and the Jr. Bills was the great "Billiken Caper" of 1980. It was the decision of coincidence that the principals of these two schools, Fr. Dressel of SLUH and Bro. Michaels of CBC, should be sitting together after dinner watching Channel 5's "Newsbeat", which reported the theft of the Billiken and interviewed the perpetrators.

Unfortunately for those Cadets their principal was able to establish their identities despite having their faces blacked out by a special lighting arrangement. Next morning Fr. Dressel was greeted by Brother Michaels, the four pranksters, and a tarp-covered Billiken in the back of a truck. Fr. Dressel suggested, after a session brimming with apologies and promises "never to do it again", that the group go out and check the mascot to make sure it had returned to its normally pure white color. Checking it, noted Fr. Cummings, "was a sheer stroke of genius." When they removed the tarp, a bright yellow stripe, which had been added to the statue's complexion after Brother Michael's check, burned in their eyes as Fr. Dressel put up a mighty effort to restrain the laughter.

—Tom Quillin