

**This Week's Message
from Fr. Amesse
August 17, 2025**



A few Fridays ago, all of us Oblates went to St. William's in Tewksbury to see four seminarians take their first vows. That is why Father Collins celebrated the 5:30 Mass. It was good to see the young Oblates. It reminded me of many years of Father Dennis Cooney.

Father Dennis Cooney, a classmate of Fathers Conserva and Tremblay, was a good preacher. I remember many of his homilies. One I remember was in 1996. The Eastern Province of the United States gathered for a Congress. In his sermon, he spoke about chickens. He explained how to get them to fly.

The farmer picked up the fowl, as if it were a football. Farmer Brown became punter. He kicked the chicken. Only then would the bird fly. The point of Father Cooney's homily was to tell us why we were gathered at a Congress. The Holy Spirit was going to boot us, so we could fly.

Now, we Oblates are regarded as apostolic men, living in community, to soar as eagles, to do the will of God. Father Dennis brought us all down to earth. He compared us, not to eagles, but to chickens. None of us were insulted. In fact, we smiled.

We all could do better in being generous in serving and loving God. Father Bill Atkinson, OMI, wrote a letter to me when I entered the Oblates in the summer of '74. "If you give yourself wholeheartedly to God, you will experience setbacks, sufferings and struggles. But your life will be filled with meaning."

"And you will experience happiness." That's what Father Bill wrote in '74. Fifty years later there are times when the Holy Spirit, like Farmer Brown, has to treat me like a chicken so I may soar like an eagle. And what about you? As we gather for Mass, we renew the promise we made at baptism to be generous to Jesus.

As I saw the young Oblate seminarians take their first vows, I know they will soar like eagles.

I remember you at Mass!