



Nicolo Franchetti

1878-1980

The fraternity honours a man who exemplifies brotherly love and those moral and social virtues that cement us together as masons. He deserves to be known and remembered. The public milestones of his life are easy to relate, but the impact of his life is more difficult to grasp; these newspaper articles help a little.

Telegraph Journal Dec 23, 1978

Commemorates 100th Birthday



EDMUNDSTON – St. John the Baptist Anglican Church was filled to capacity for the festival service of thanksgiving to commemorate the 100th birthday and 64th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood of Rev. Canon Nicolò Franchetti, M.A., F.Ph.S.

Nicolò Franchetti was born in London, England, on Dec. 18, 1878. He worked in an office and became a lay reader at Holy Trinity Church Swansea, Wales. With the aid of the Rector, Rev. George Packer he went to study for the ministry at St Aides Birkenhead and at St. Columbus, (Durham University), where he obtained his diploma in Theology.

He came to Fredericton in 1913 and was ordained Deacon of Christ Church Cathedral. He began his ministry in Hartland where he designed the present church, patterned on Holy Trinity, in Swansea. He was ordained priest on December 20, 1914, by the late Archbishop Richardson in St. Luke's Church, Woodstock. In 1921, he was appointed Rector of St. John the Baptist Anglican Church Edmundston, where he served for 42 years until failing eyesight forced his retirement in 1963. In 1954, he was appointed Canon of Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton. The

following year, he obtained his MA from St. Louis University, Edmundston. In 1959, the General Board of Religious Education, Toronto, published the Canon's "A Churchman's Dictionary," which is still widely used. During his years of active ministry, he served under four Bishops of New Brunswick, Archbishop Richardson, Bishop W.H. Moorhead, Archbishop A.H. O'Neil and the present Bishop, Harold L. Nutter.

Canon Franchetti was a talented church architect. He drew the plans for the Anglican Churches at Hartland, Prince William, St. Margaret's, Fredericton and at Oromocto and the United Church at McAdam. He made extensive revisions and supervised the refurbishing of St. John the Baptist Church with hand-carved pulpit, lectern, font and altar-rail. This church was referred to by former Archbishop A.H. O'Neil as "Canon Franchetti's little Cathedral of the North." On October 20, 1974, the Church celebrated its 100th anniversary.

In addition to his ability as a Church Architect, the Canon was also an artist of distinction, having painted several beautiful water-color pictures.

Canon Franchetti still robes and assists the Rector, Rev. Stuart F. Dunn, at St. John the Baptist Church. Once a month, although now totally blind, he accompanies the lay-reader, Russell Staples, to the Mission of All Saints Church, Grand Falls, where he delivers the sermon and pronounces the benediction.

Following the service held in his honor, a banquet was held in the Kinsmen Golden Age Club, where Rev. Stuart F. Dunn was master of ceremonies.

A birthday cake, inscribed '100' presented by the City of Edmundston, was the focal point near the head table.

Flowers on the altar were placed as a thanksgiving for the ministry of Canon Franchetti by Rev. Eymard Desjardin of the Cathedral of the Immaculate

Conception. Mrs. James Clark was organist and choir director.

Rev. Stuart F. Dunn officiated and was assisted by a former Rector, Rev. Lyman Harding of Woodstock, who was representing Bishop Harold L. Nutter.

Scripture lessons were read by Robert Jessop of Edmundston Branch No. 25, Royal Canadian Legion and Rev. Eymard Desjardins. The Sermon was delivered by Rev. Canon Franchetti, who was for 42 years, Rector of this Church. Among the congregation was a group of Marist Sisters¹ from Mont St. Marie.

New carpeting, presented by Branch NO. 25 in appreciation of Canon Franchetti's having been their Chaplain for the past 35 years was, was dedicated by the Rev. S.F. Dunn. He said he was reminded of the inscription of the eminent architect, Christopher Wren, - "If you need a memorial, look around you." He said the beautification of this Church was the Canon's life-long work.

Memorial gifts of sterling silver the Church possesses, which were stolen and badly damaged a year and a half ago, and were subsequently recovered by the Edmundston Police Department, were in use for the

Evening Times Globe Jan 12, 1979

EDMUNDSTON, N.B. - "When a man is willing and able to carry on the work he has chosen to do, it is not right that he should be forced to retire because of his age."

Canon Nicolo Franchetti said that in 1963 as he sat in his study, pondering retirement at the age of 84. He was angry at the thought that he had to give up the work he had been doing at the Anglican parish for the past 42 years.

Last month the community of Edmundston joined in a festival of thanksgiving service for Canon Franchetti in a celebration of his 100th birthday and the 64th anniversary of his ordination.

"He is still very unhappy at retirement and still feels he is the rector of the parish," says Rev. Stuart Dunn

first time since being repaired and restored. These sterling silver Communion vessels were all presented to the church during Canon Franchetti's ministry.

The toast was proposed by Rev. Eymard Desjardins with recollection of his 26 years of association with Canon Franchetti, who, he said, "**was practising ecumenism long before it became a household word**" He also spoke of the Canon's close friendship with his predecessor, the late Msgr. W.J. Conway.

Congratulatory messages were read by Rev. S.F. Dunn, who called on the following to speak: Rev. L.N. Harding brought greetings from the Bishop and clergy of the Anglican Diocese of Fredericton; Rev. Dr. W.L. Randall, from the congregation of St. Paul's United Church; and Mayor Louis Lavoie from the City of Edmundston and Republic of Madawaska.

Others reading greetings were Rupert McCabe of Branch No. 25, from J.B.M. McFadzen; the message of Lt. Gow. Hedard Robichaud by J.L.A. Pelletier; message from Premier Hatfield by Antoine Desjardin; messages from the Hon. Eymard Corbin and the Rt Hon. Pierre Elliot Trudeau by Richard Shaw. Mr. Dunn announced that a message from Her Majesty the Queen, had been transmitted.

who had succeeded him at St. John the Baptist Church. "He is mentally alert and preached at the Remembrance Day service. He still robes and assists at each service."

The outspoken Canon, who believes it a duty to continue his work as long as there is breath left in his body, has Scripture quotations to support his views.

Canon Franchetti has served for 39 years as chaplain to the local branch of the Canadian Legion, whose membership is 95 per cent French-speaking Roman Catholic. Legion members will give the church a gift of carpeting as a tribute to their chaplain.

Born in London, England, of Italian parents, Canon Franchetti came to Fredericton in 1913. Eight years later he went to the parish in Edmundston and served there until failing eyesight forced his retirement

¹ **The Marist Sisters** - an international congregation or order of Roman Catholic women. The order built a large building in Edmundston in 1952, initially to

house an orphanage but it has been home to many functions since. Teaching, including music and crafts have been the principal vocation of the order.

Telegraph Journal April 12, 1979

Edmundston Church Honors Franchetti

At a Vestry meeting of St. John, the Baptist Anglican Church, Edmundston held prior to the Maundy Thursday service it was decided that the Undercroft of the Church will be named Franchetti Hall, in memory

of the late Canon Nicolo Franchetti. The Canon's portrait by local artist Claude Picard will hang on the wall with the framed diplomas and other memorabilia.

(This Testimonial in large print hangs in St. John the Baptist Church, Edmundston)

Testimonial

To the Reverend N. Franchetti to mark the occasion off twenty-five years continuous service as Rector of Saint John the Baptist Anglican Church; Edmundston, New Brunswick.

Dear Mr. Franchetti,

Twenty -five years ago, in succession to the Reverend Canon Bacon, you journeyed to Edmundston on the Upper Saint John River and assumed charge of this Parish and the spiritual welfare of the member of this congregation.

How well and faithfully you have administered the affairs of Church and State in the intervening years is a source of great pride and satisfaction to y our parishioners and friends.

The tenure of your Priesthood here has been one of continued progress despite many difficult years and trying circumstances, but no difficulty has been too great for you to surmount, and the results attained are a tribute to your good works.

Since the erection of his Church in 1875 there have been several changes all calculated to improve and beautify the Church property8, both outside and in, and many of these are the result of your efforts and initiative.

The Church Tower and Bell which were erected in 1928 under plans prepared by you added greatly to the dignity and appearance of the Church. The landscaping of the Church grounds and cemetery and the improvements to the Church Hall are further testimony to your energy and culture. The foregoing is but a few of your major accomplishments in past years.

During the Second World War, this month of which marks the first anniversary of its ending in Europe, you found time amidst your regular work and parochial duties to volunteer and serve for five years as Chaplain to hundreds of men of His Majesty's Forces who passed through No. 71 Training Centre here.

During the past year you had the honour of presenting to His Lordship, Bishop Moorehead, the largest class of candidates ever confirmed in the history of this Parish.

Since coming to Edmundston, you and your good wife, by your kindness, charity and Christian characters, have rendered noble service and endeared yourselves not only to the members of this congregation but to countless others of this town and countryside, regardless of race and faith.

On this Twenty -Fifth Anniversary of your Ministry in Edmundston, we, your friends, and fellow citizens, have gathered here this evening to honour, congratulate and thank you for your good services, and to express our profound respect for and admiration of our good and faithful friends Mr. and Mrs. Franchetti.

17th May 1946

Sources:

- 1) Archives of the Anglican Diocese of Fredericton held in Public Archives of N.B.
- 2) Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 52
- 3) Mrs. Helen MacFarlane and her daughter, Rhonda Mackenzie, former neighbours of Canon Franchetti.

1st Story – Canon Franchetti had a bar in his house; he used it when it was helpful to put one of the parishioners at ease so they could “unload” on him. Mrs. MacFarlane remembered that he had a way of dropping in on gatherings invited or not, he seemed to find company – he could adapt to any group. The MacFarlanes knew of the recognition he received from the brewery in Grand Falls and presented the Grand Lodge of New Brunswick with a bottle they had saved with the label and contents in pristine condition. Also, they presented us with photos of Franchetti as a young Chaplain in military dress.

2nd Story – when his vision was normal, he loved Golf. His golfing chums knew how much he loved it and on one occasion took him to the driving range and placed a ball so he could hit it, which he did with delight.

3rd Story – friends owning a brewery in Grand Falls paid tribute to Canon Franchetti by having him on their label (see bottle of beer in display)

Some of the many accomplishments:

Author – “A Churchman’s Dictionary” Published by the General Board of Religious Education, Toronto, 1959

Architect -

A. Church Designs and Construction

1. St. Margaret’s (Morrison Church) 1921
2. Grand Falls
3. Edmundston, N.B. – St. John The Baptist Church (1926) and Church Hall (1929)²
4. Ludlow and Blissfield parish –
 - a. St. Andrew’s Church (1953)
 - b. Doaktown, N.B. – St. James’ Church (1953)
5. Oromocto, N.B. – St. John’s Church (1920)
6. Hartland, N.B. – Holy Trinity Church (1920)³

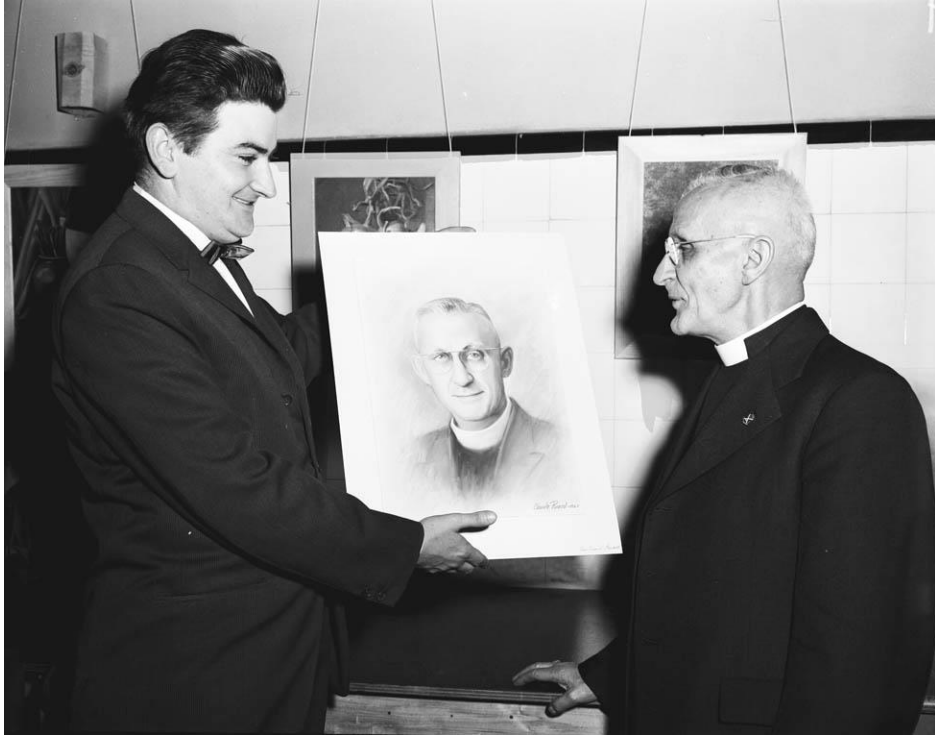
B. Cemeteries and Graveyards

1. St. John the Baptist Burial Ground– Edmundston
2. Wicklow, Wilmot, Peel & Aberdeen parish
 - a. St. James Burial Ground
 - b. Our Saviour’s Churchyard, Foley Brook
3. Aberdeen & Brighton Parish
 - a. Christ Church Burial Ground, Glassville (1920)

Artist – An accomplished amateur, Franchetti studied art under Claude Picard, famous New Brunswick master. Picard admired his student and did a portrait of him.

² St. John the Baptist Church Provincial Historic Site was constructed between 1878 and 1887, based on a design provided by Anglican Bishop John Medley. Gothic Revival is among the aesthetic components associated with Medley-influenced churches. A large exterior tower and steeple, a three-stage Gothic design by **Canon Nicolo Franchetti**, was added to the north-west side in 1927. Listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places – Formally Recognized: 1991/05/16.

³ Holy Trinity Anglican Church is designated a Local Historic Place (2010/02/01) for its architectural qualities as well as for its religious and cultural influences. ... **Rev. N. Franchetti**, the man who was instrumental in making the church a reality, and who was its chief designer.



Builder – Supervised construction of several churches

Chaplain – 1. Royal Canadian Legion
2. Grand Chaplain – Grand Lodge of New Brunswick 1938

Mason - 1. Bethel Lodge No. 40 Edmundston, N.B.
2. Concordant bodies – Scottish Rite; Shrine

Priest – Served Edmundston parishioners for 40 years.