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From a Wonderful New Biography Called FATHER JIMMY Fr. Jimmy Tompkins in Reserve Mines Breton Books is proud to announce the publication of Father Jimmy: Life and Times of Jimmy Tompidns. This book is the first in a series meant to keep alive the ideas and ideals of the Antigonish Movement. Father Jimmy Tompkins was the spiritual father of the co-op movement in Nova Scotia. When he ?; insisted that the university should serve the average person, his bishop banished him to parish f work among Nova Scotia's poorest fishermen. Once over the shock, Tompkins encouraged f cooperation, self-reliance and adult educaiton • testing the roots of what became the Antigonish Movement. Angered by injustice, fortified by compassion and faith, Tompkins and his cousin Fa? ther Moses Coady used the power of their roles to get people to make a difference in their own lives. Tompkins was father of the regional library system and of co-op housing in Nova Scotia. Written by Jim Lotz and Michael R. Welton, and filled with wonderful quotes from Tompkins and from people who knew him, Fattier Jimmy brings his ideas to life again • an inspiration, chal? lenge, and tool for those who really want to make a difference today. Here is a selection from Fattier Jimmy: The Library in Reserve l/lines BITTER MEMORIES OF THE 1925 STRIKE still pervaded Reserve Mines when the new priest arrived ten years later. In contrast to the highly independent ways of inshore fishermen, coal miners in Cape Breton had developed strong bonds of com? munity and brotherhood. Strikes strengthened their sense of uni? ty, and unions taught them the rudiments of organization, agita? tion and presentation to government. But, dominated by absentee owners and an American-based union, they had little control over their own lives. The miners lived by the colliery whistle. One blast meant work, two meant another idle day. If the miners worked two days, that was a good week. One more shift and there would be butter on the potatoes and meat with the bread. Mary Ellicott Arnold, who became Father Jimmy's staunch ally in Reserve, described the town: "Reserve Mines is not so very different from other little mining towns. There is a narrow main street, ruddy in spring and icy in winter. There are rows of company houses. There is smoke from No. 10 that drifts in a long streamer across the town. There is life regimented by the whistles. In 1937 and 1938 there was a problem of feeding a family from a pay envelope which held only pay from three days work in the mine. But there was also something different which makes Reserve very differ? ent indeed from other mining towns. There is the Glebe House and Dr. Tompkins." Father Coady pointed out: "[Father Tompkins] could adjust himself to his environ? ment whatever it might be.... He was, as a parish priest, a solici? tous spiritual leader. But also, in the fishing community of Can- so, he was a fisherman directly concerned with the economic and social problems of the community.... In Reserve Mines, he was a miner...." Mary and Joe Laben, local people, worked close? ly with the new priest. Mary observed: "Dr. Tompkins came to Reserve in 1935. And of course the first thing that he did, he gave one look around and saw everybody standing around the comers and going to



taverns and everything else, and I guess he said, 'I guess I better start doing something.' So he got a library. Organized with the help of the Carnegie Foundation, you know. He'd pinhole every boy or girl that he'd meet on the street to go to the library to read. So Joe went to the library with Father Jimmy and he started reading his books." The priest's church, St. Joseph's, stood at the opposite end of the town from the colliery, and had a congregation of four hundred families. Father Jimmy settled quickly into his pastoral duties, counseling parishioners and taking night calls when mine accidents occurred. He kept a stack of books and papers by the side of his bed, and read as voraciously as ever. His curate, Father Allan MacAdam, often met him in the rectory corridor at six in the morning. "Say, Mac, have you seen this?" the old priest would ask, thrusting forward a book with sections underlined and fierce scrawls in the margins.... In the pulpit, the priest devoted his sermons to local issues. Joe Laben held book Number 4 in the credit union he helped establish in Reserve Mines. He had gone to study meetings held by Fr. Coady and A. B. MacDonald. A highly intelligent man with a photographic memory and a Grade 3 education, Joe recalled: "Prior to Dr. Jimmy, we were scared of priests. We had some very cross priests that would never bother with the people