

# Dr. Martin Retiring After 25 Years at Christ Church

By DEBORAH CLARK  
News Staff Writer

His parishoners say he will be the first to point out that he alone did not accomplish the growth and achievements at Christ Church over the past quarter century. The parishoners say he would point out "that the vestry and all members of the church should be given credit," and, of course, God.

But Dr. Junius Jeffries Martin has made many contributions to Christ Church in his almost 25 years there, according to his congregation, and on his retirement from the clergy and as minister of Christ Church, the congregation would like to show their gratitude for his many years of service.

Tonight, Dr. Martin and his wife Dorothy will be honored at a retirement dinner at Sea Palms. He will be retiring only eight months away from a silver anniversary as rector of the 242-year-old church.

Dr. Martin became rector at Christ Church in October, 1953. Since that time, the number of communicants of the church has grown from 222 to over 450. There have been in this almost 25 years, 357 baptisms; 505 confirmations; 185 weddings; and, three church members have entered the ministry.

During Dr. Martin's tenure, many improvements have been made to the 162 year-old church building and to the beautiful and historic grounds.

The Lych Gate, among the first of several gifts donated as memorials by parishoners, was installed, followed by the Trevandan wall and new construction on the parish house. In 1955, a new sacristy and robing rooms for the clergy were constructed; a new roof was added to the rectory; central heat and air and carpeting were added to the church. The cemetery surrounding the church, which contains the graves of many of the island's first citizens, received a new gate and markers pointing out the his-



Dr. J. J. Martin

torical significance of the church and grounds were erected.

Said one member of Dr. Martin's contributions to the church, "25 years can but begin to delineate the accomplishments in church character and development which can be traced directly or indirectly to Dr. Martin's leadership." He has been appreciated for his counseling of families, positive influence on youth and the prayer group he joins monthly and for his contributions toward a church library and renewed church program.

In retirement, Dr. Martin said he may devote more time to his hobbies, travel, or perhaps find the time to compile a history of the church of which he is so much a part.

Dr. Martin expresses a fascination for the history of the area, particularly the church, and feels there is a real need to record it.

The church, he said, actually had its beginnings in 1736 when John Wesley began preaching at the new colony of Frederica. In the two centuries of its exist-

tence, the church has struggled through early colonization, a Civil War which caused great devastation to the island and the church, and through a reconstruction which eventually yielded a congregation stronger and more determined than ever.

Dr. Martin said that several histories exist about the church, including one called, "Christ Church, Frederica A Commemoration A.D. 1910," written on the 175th anniversary of the church, a copy of which he has donated to the Brunswick-Glynn County Library. There is another history, which Dr. Martin authored, and it is distributed to visitors to the historic site.

Of his 25 years at Christ Church, Dr. Martin said there are many memories. He has delivered sermons to a congregation including the President of the United States, Jimmy Carter. He has served various terms on the Diocesan Council; held a chairmanship of the Department of Christian Social Relations; and has served as representative of the Diocese of Georgia on the Georgia Council of Churches, among many other activities.

Locally, he is a member of the Rotary International; the Library Board for the St. Simons Public Library; was a member of the local chapter of the Council on Human Relations; and, a member of the Chrysalis School Board partially sponsored by Christ Church.

A native of Adairsville, he is the son of William Paul and Julia Abbott Martin. He attended Young Harris College; Wake Forest College, from which he graduated magna cum laude; Andover Newton Theological School, and; the University of the South, Suwanee, where he received his degree of doctor of divinity.

He was ordained to diaconate in 1939; and to the priesthood in 1940 at Christ Church, Exeter, N.H. by the Rt. Rev. John Dallas, Bishop of New Hampshire.