



Heavenly tobacco

Caribe hosts Father H on his first visit to a cigar factory

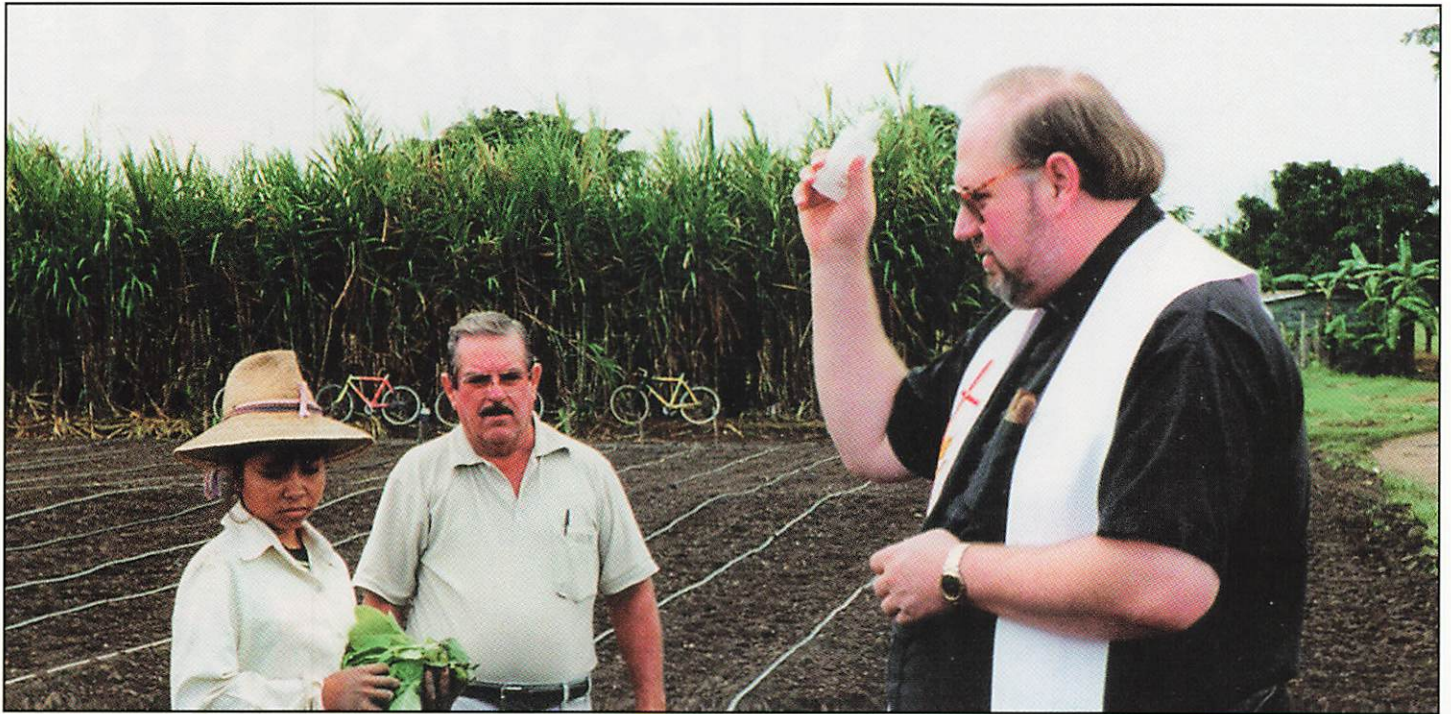
Sal Fontana has been in the cigar business a long time and has had quite a few successes, and maybe a few rough times. Remembering those bad experiences, Fontana decided that, even with the tremendous success that Caribe Imported Cigars is having these days, it couldn't hurt to have a little "special" support.

So, earlier this year, Fontana invited Father H Jay Setter to visit Caribe's factory and tobacco fields in Danli, Honduras, and the famed Jalapa Valley growing area. Better known as Father H (H is his full first name)

to his church members at St. Mary's Church in Derby, Kan., the priest is quite the cigar buff. He's been to every *Cigar Aficionado* Big Smoke since he attended his first in May 1994 in Chicago.

Fontana had met the priest at a Big Smoke and decided that such a devout fan of cigars needed to visit cigar country, taking in the total cigar experience, from field to factory. And while he was there, Fontana decided it wouldn't hurt to have the priest do a little work—blessing the tobacco crop and the work in the Caribe factory. "It was quite a lot of fun," Fontana says. "He really enjoyed himself, taking a lot of information back with him. And our people in Honduras really got a kick out of him. They thought he was great."

The large-framed, 6-foot 5-inch priest, in collar and



Father H blesses Caribe's tobacco fields in Honduras (above); (right photo) Sal Fontana, right, teaches Father H and Robbie Levin, owner of Holt's Cigar shop in Philadelphia, the art of rolling a premium cigar; (bottom photo) Levin, Father H and Fontana pose in the tobacco field.



black shirt, stood out wherever he went in Honduras, a primarily Catholic country, Fontana says. "I know he enjoyed his few days with us in Honduras as much as we enjoyed sharing the cigar process with him."

"Father H is a unique person," Fontana says. "And when you see the pleasure he gets out of cigars and visiting with cigarmakers, you want to do everything you can for him. I would imagine, for Father H, cigars come second only to his boss—and that's just fine by me."

Father H even has his own web site: <http://www.holy-smoke.com>. And on this site, the father rates cigars, and tells of his visit to the Caribe factory and subsequent journeys to other cigar factories and countries. He has become quite the celebrity on the Web and at the cigar events. ■

