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DAYTON, Ohio, March 12, 1970 --- Father Edwin Weber will shift his role from teacher in the theology department at the University of Dayton to student in archeology this summer when he becomes a student-observer at a half dozen archeological operations in Israel this June.

His first stop will be at Tel Anafa, near the Lebanese border, a site dating back to 4000 B.C. that is being excavated by a University of Missouri expedition.

Next he will join an expedition near Gaza that is reopening a "dig" started a half century ago by the noted archeologist, Sir Flinders Petrie. The site, known as Tel el-Hesi, dates from pre-biblical times. Petrie made a name for himself by showing how potsherds--fragments of clay vessels--could supply valuable clues to ancient civilizations. Petrie's expedition, however, was discontinued nearly 80 years ago and very little is known about Tel el-Hesi. The reopening of the site is under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Philip King, archeologist of St. John's Seminary, Boston. The expedition is sponsored by the American Societies for Oriental Research.

Father Weber will then move on to the excavations being done at Gezer by the Archeological Institute of Hebrew Union College, and to the Mazar excavations near the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem.

He will also visit Tel Qasile, an ancient site now in danger of being engulfed by the suburbs of Tel Aviv. It dates back to the reign of Hiram of Tyre and the building of the First Temple at Jerusalem.

If time permits, he also hopes to visit the Dead Sea region, retracing the route taken by Bishop James Pike on his ill-fated trip last summer.

During his four-week stay in Israel, Father Ed will also renew friendships made three years ago during his year of study at Ulpan Akiva, a Hebrew language school 20 miles north of Tel Aviv. (He was there during the Six Day War of June, 1967.) His objectives in Israel at that time were Scripture study (which he teaches at U.D.), increased familiarity with Hebrew (which he had studied for 18 months in a crash course before going to Israel), and first-hand familiarity with areas described in the Old and New Testaments.

He is looking forward to revisiting Jay Freres, a member of the U.S. Embassy, in whose home at Herzlia he often said Mass for the members of the small Catholic Community.

Father Ed's new venture into biblical archeology was made possible through the Avodat Haberim Association. "It's far from being a Cook's Tour," he observed. Average cost per day three years ago was about \$2.70 for both meals and lodging. This trip, he says, will of necessity, also be somewhat spartan. "I could care less about that," he remarked. "I'm just glad that I have a chance to be there."