

SCJ NEWS

a newsletter of the U.S. Province of the Priests of the Sacred Heart

February 2010

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A new church AND a new parish

Two faith communities come together as one in the new Good Shepherd parish

In the literal sense, a building is just a material object. It is brick and mortar, electrical lines and pipes. It is a place to keep people and their things dry and warm (or pleasantly cool, depending on the time of year).

Yet these inanimate objects soon take on personality and can be as important to us as our closest family members or friends. Buildings dearest to our heart often include our childhood homes, our schools and our churches.

"We all have a special place in our hearts for our own places," said Bishop Joseph Latino, bishop of the Diocese of Jackson. "It can be hard to accept change in these special places."

The members of Good Shepherd Parish in Robinsonville, Miss., have experienced a lot of change in the past year. Not only do they have a new church building, but they also have a new parish. It was a celebration of both that brought people together on January 10.

Bishop Latino joined the parishioners of Good Shepherd to dedicate and bless their new church. The church is the place of worship for the newly created parish of Good Shepherd, a bringing together of the faith communities of St. Anthony's in Tunica and Sacred Heart in Walls.

By merging, both communities gain a great deal — including a beautiful new church and gathering facilities. However, in coming together members of each community also mourn the loss of what they left behind.

"I think that I speak for many when I say that we weren't necessarily against the merger of the churches," said parishioner Lynn Sturgill. "But we had worked very hard — over 20 years — to acquire a church presence of our own in Tunica. We worshipped in an old house. Then we were in a former liquor store that we converted into a very, very small church. At last we — the parishioners with our own money — bought a lovely home in a grove on the outskirts of town. It is hard to say good-bye to that."

PHOTOS TOP TO BOTTOM: Fr. Bob Tucker, moderator of the pastoral team that ministers to Good Shepherd (as well as Holy Spirit in Hernando, St. Gregory the Great in Senatobia and Christ the King in Southaven) with Bishop Joseph Latino of Jackson; Fr. Tim Gray spreads the chrism on the altar; Fr. Frank Burshnick and Fr. David Szatkowski. Fr. Frank, now retired, ministered in Mississippi for many years and Fr. David is a doctoral student in canon law in Rome. **MORE PHOTOS ARE AT:** www.scjusa.smugmug.com





Concelebrants at the dedication Mass included SCJs of the Mississippi community, as well as Fr. Tom Cassidy, provincial superior, Fr. John Czyzynski, novice master (the novices served at the liturgy) and Bishop Joseph Latino, bishop of Jackson.

Sr. Margaret Sue Broker, a parishioner at Sacred Heart in Walls for almost 50 years, echoed Lynn Sturgill when she said that "I think that there is almost always a certain sense of grieving when something loved, honored and respected, something which is an integral part of one's life, is drastically changed." Sr. Margaret Sue, who has worked in Mississippi for much of her adult life as a part of Sacred Heart Southern Missions, has come to know four and five generations of families at the parish. "I have taught as many as three generations; I have rejoiced, suffered and grieved with many. There have been many changes during this time."

But the creation of a new, combined parish at a new church is certainly the biggest change the community of Sacred Heart has experienced in Sr. Margaret Sue's 49 years in Walls. "But we realize that it is just the

community that has moved," she said. "Brick and mortar has nothing to do with community."

Many people at the dedication spoke of what had been and the history of the two faith communities. But while there was much reflection on the past, the dedication was anything but a memorial service. Members of both communities spoke well of their past,



Fr. Dermot Twomey was instrumental in the development of Good Shepherd. Unfortunately, he died before seeing the church's completion. However, several members of his family were able to take part in the celebration.

but also with much excitement about their future as the new parish community of Good Shepherd.

"We are still getting organized and finding out each other's talents," said Lynn, noting that the new parish is sorting out its committees and responsibilities. "But more people offer more possibilities. I feel very strong in my faith here, in the future of the Church and of our church."

Camille Leatherman, a member of the family that donated land for the new church, also noted that more peo-

ple allow for more possibilities. She shared the story of a woman who was at Mass the day before. After Mass the woman came to talk to a few parishioners who were in the kitchen preparing for the next day's dedication. Loretta Hussey was icing the multi-layer cake she had made for the celebration. "I heard this lady go back and talk to Loretta, asking for her prayers because she needed a job. Loretta and I prayed for her right on the spot." The three women talked for a while and learned that the woman who was in need of a job had previously worked in a bank. From Colombia, she was also bilingual. "Loretta works at a bank and said that they were often in need of bilingual tellers; she would talk to her supervisors."

"This is what I hope for in our new parish," continued Camille. "More numbers allow us to have more groups of people who can really get to know each other and help each other. We can become a stronger family, and as people move in and join us I hope that they too will find the Good Shepherd present in us as we come together and help each other."

Fr. Dermot Twomey, SCJ, is credited by many for bringing the two communities together. "Without his vision and desire we wouldn't have had a church in Robinsonville," said Camille.

Now deceased, Fr. Dermot was pastor of Sacred Heart in Walls and the mission of St. Anthony in Tunica. With fewer priests available to serve the area he encouraged members of both faith communities to consider combining into one parish. Br. Ray Kozuch, SCJ, later helped facilitate the merging of the two communities.

"I regret that Fr. Dermot could not be here with us at the dedication," said Lynn Sturgill. "In the years that he was with us, from the converted liquor store to our home church in the country, he taught us to be church and to work toward being a strong faith community."

Fr. Dermot may not have been there but several members of his family flew in from the East Coast to join in

the dedication. "It was wonderful to have them with us," said Camille Leatherman.

A third community

While there was much talk about the coming together of Walls Sacred Heart and Tunica St. Anthony, a third community is also a part of the new family at Good Shepherd. At some Masses, this third group outnumbers the rest. It is the tourists who visit the nearby casinos in Tunica.

Developed less than 20 years ago (the first casino — "Splash" — opened in 1992), the Tunica casinos now have over 14,000 slots and electronic games, 400 table games and well over 6,000 hotel suites and rooms. Tourists come by the busload not only from Memphis and other neighboring cities but from across the country. And many of them are Catholic.

"The first time we had a tour bus of 50 pile in for Mass we knew that we had to do something," said Camille Leatherman.

Some of the tourists pass through and are never seen again. But many make frequent visits — to the casinos and to Good Shepherd. "We sometimes think of them as our cousins," said one parishioner. "They ask about our families and we ask about theirs. We know each other and care for one another. But we also know that they have their own parishes back home to support." The cousins do have their own homes to maintain, but parishioners at Good Shepherd hope that they can encourage the "visiting cousins" to help a bit with the upkeep of their "vacation home."

"They are always welcome and we love to have them with us," said a parishioner. "But it is nice when they offer to help out with expenses, just like picking up a dinner bill when visiting friends."

Good Shepherd is one of four parishes ministered to by a pastoral team that includes Fr. Tim Gray, SCJ, Fr. Bob Tucker, SCJ (team moderator) and Fr. Ed Zemlik, SCJ. The other three parishes served by the team:



LEFT: Fr. Jack Kurps, master of ceremonies for the dedication, with one of the KCs. RIGHT: Sr. Margaret Sue Broker, long-time member of Sacred Heart parish and teacher at Sacred Heart School, places the new altar cloth. **MORE PHOTOS AT: www.scjusa.smugmug.com**

Holy Spirit in Hernando, St. Gregory the Great in Senatobia and Christ the King in Southaven. Also on the pas-

toral team are Sr. Emily Morgan, Sr. Bonnie Bachle and Sr. Susan Newland.

Fr. Richard Zelonis dies

Following complications from a stroke, Fr. Richard Zelonis, SCJ, died in Milwaukee January 3.

Originally from Niagara Falls, NY, Fr. Richard, 81, had been a member of the Priests of the Sacred Heart since 1975. He was a 1978 graduate of Sacred Heart School of Theology and was ordained in 1979.



Fr. Richard Zelonis
1928 - 2010

His first assignment was at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Raymondville, Texas. From 1980-82 he was at Christ the King in Southaven, Miss., and from 1983-86 he served at Infant of Prague in Boonville, Miss.

He left Mississippi for South Dakota in 1987. For three years he ministered at St. Martin parish in Murdo, SD. Fr. Richard then went east to be closer to his family. He

ministered at Holy Family parish in Buffalo and St. Joseph parish in Niagara Falls.

From 1993-98 he served as chaplain at St. Monica's Retirement Home in Racine, Wis. After that, he retired himself, first as a member of the Pinellas Park community in Florida, and then as a member of the Mississippi community. In recent years he had been a member of the Villa Maria community in Franklin, Wis., with residence at the Congregational Home in Franklin, Wis.

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“Being an SCJ and all it embodies is my way life”

-Frater Duy Nguyen

Frater Duy Nguyen, SCJ, didn't have to go far when he joined the province formation program. Born and raised on the north side of Chicago, Frater Duy now lives and studies only a short drive from his childhood haunts.

He first came in contact with the SCJs in 1999 when his family was invited to a gathering at the province's formation house. “At that time, I did not know who they were or what they were all about,” said Frater Duy. It would be another

three years — at a youth gathering in Toronto — before Frater Duy would formally meet the community and “eventually discover my calling and the charism of the SCJs.”

He had to go to another country to discover the religious community of which he would be a part, the one with a community house just a few miles from his childhood home.

He professed his first vows in 2006. On January 30, Frater Duy, 31, made his final profession with the Priests of the Sacred Heart during a ceremony at Sacred Heart Monastery.

“This is a milestone for our U.S. Province,” said Fr. Tom Cassidy, SCJ, in his homily at Frater Duy's final profession ceremony. “With your final profession, Duy, you become the first American-born Vietnamese to do so. We, in a nation of immigrants, note the importance of this moment. You bring to our community values from your ancient homeland now mixed with values you developed as a child growing up in Chicago, and as a candidate and young SCJ religious.”



Frater Duy Nguyen

Before entering candidacy, Frater Duy studied at the University of Illinois in Champaign. He later transferred to the University of Chicago and earned a bachelor's degree in Information and Decision Sciences (he describes it as a mix of computer and business skills).

Frater Duy has one semester at CTU left before graduation. He broke up his studies two years ago with a pastoral year based in Lower Brule, S.D.

Three years ago, as Frater Duy was preparing to profess his first vows, he was asked to

write a reflection for the province publication *To the Letter*. The topic for his reflection included a letter by Fr. Dehon regarding SCJ candidates who were preparing for profession in 1919. Frater Duy thought of what the founder might be saying to him as he was preparing for profession in the community 87 years later.

“Amidst the concerns and stresses of daily activities in our lives, whether it's preparing for the ceremony or completing a ‘to-do’ list before the academic year starts, I'm reminded to focus on my prayer life, to continually foster a deep and real relationship with God.”

It's a focus that Frater Duy has continued to strive for while completing his studies at Catholic Theological Union and preparing for final vows.

“Before any type of ministry can be done, one must unite with God first,” wrote Frater Duy. “All good works will flow as a result of this union...”

“Fr. Dehon's life is proof that union with God is not far-fetched. All

it takes is hard work, discipline and the grace of God.”

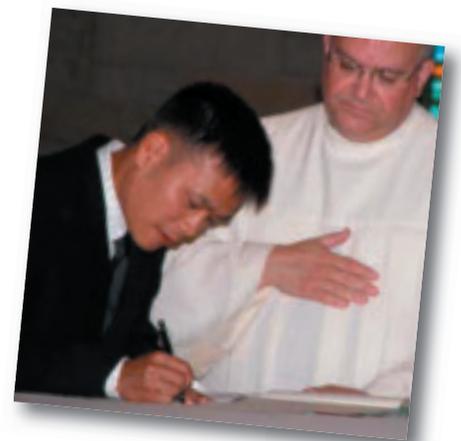
As Frater Duy prepared to make his perpetual commitment with the community he compared final vows with those first vows he professed in 2006.

“They are the same vows,” he said, “yet they are different. The difference is in commitment. In temporary vows, leaving is always an option if life as an SCJ doesn't work out, if God calls you somewhere else. In a sense, it's like test-driving a vehicle. But with final vows, the commitment is life-long.

“It's a complete dedication to serve God and the Church through the lenses of Fr. Dehon.

“Will I feel different after professing final vows? In substance, I won't feel any different. I'm still the same person. But my perspective has changed. Being an SCJ and all it embodies is my way life from now on.”

In closing his homily, Fr. Tom reminded Frater Duy that he is one of many. “You do not go alone today. Around the province your fellow SCJs, including those who are not present this morning, are praying for you and rejoicing with you. Know that we will sustain you by our prayers and support in the days and years ahead. In their name I congratulate you and welcome you as our newest finally professed member of our beloved U.S. Province of the Priests of the Sacred Heart.”



Making his first profession in 2006.



Much of the SCJs' January gathering centered on one-on-one and small group sharing. Here, novice Luis Fernando Orozco Cardona and Fr. John Klingler talk about their vision for the U.S. Province. **MORE PHOTOS AT: www.scjusa.smugmug.com**

Continuing the conversation

The conversation ends, and the conversation continues.

From January 18-21, approximately 45 members of the U.S. Province came together at Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Ill., for the third of three province gatherings. The first took place in January, 2009, and the second in July. The purpose of the gatherings was to further the dialogue begun at the 2008 Provincial Chapter. There, directional statements on Community, Aging and Ministry were formulated.

Sr. Barbara Stanbridge, IHM, facilitated the three gatherings. She also served as moderator at the 2008 Provincial Chapter.

In dialogue with Fr. Dehon

In this, the last gathering, Sr. Barbara asked SCJs to spend time in dialogue with Fr. Leo John Dehon, founder of the Priests of the Sacred Heart.

"Share with Leo what is in your heart," said Sr. Barbara. "Tell him your grief, your longings. And after you have revealed yourself to him, ask him how he sees things. How does he see your mission?"

From personal reflection, SCJs moved to one-on-one conversations with a partner. Sharing then took place in small groups and finally, with the whole. This was a process that was often repeated throughout the days. Reflections would start in one-on-one pairings and then move to small groups. To allow SCJs to hear a variety of voices, the small groups were often rearranged but always with a concern to maintain a variety of generations at each table.

"It was intriguing to hear about the dialogues with Fr. Dehon," said a participant. "It was an interesting exercise for me personally but it was just as interesting to hear about others' 'conversations' with the founder."

Listening to each other

As noted above, much of the days' activities centered around reflection and sharing. None of the gatherings focused on concrete answers. Instead, they laid the groundwork for future decision-making. They helped SCJs get to know one another better, and better know their hopes and dreams for the future of the province.

"We used to be caught up in our ministries; our dialogue focused on ministry," said a participant. "Now, I hear an emphasis on mission. What is our MISSION as SCJs in the United States?"

In looking toward the future, SCJs said that they need to be open to new models of ministry. "We need to be available to models that encourage us to better collaborate with laity and other religious," said an SCJ. "We need to be able to let go of control in some of our ministries and let others set direction... that doesn't mean that they will be less 'SCJ' but that we will allow others – in some instances – to carry forth Fr. Dehon's dreams."

"We enable people to do good," said another during the shared reflections. "Through our work we enable many people to do good things. Perhaps this is our mission, our call. We are just a handful of people but we can impact many."

"Fr. Dehon had a dream; if we live it, people will follow our charism," added another. "I was impressed when I was at the dedication of Good Shepherd Church in Robinsonville, Miss. The SCJs brought these two communities together [Sacred Heart in Walls and St. Anthony's in Tunica]; the SCJ charism is among these people. Through our ministry we touch the lives of many with our charism."

Continuing the conversation

The three scheduled gatherings have been completed. Plans are now underway to continue the conversations on the local level with the hope of coming together as a province for continued dialogue and spiritual renewal on a yearly basis.



Bishop Michael Wustenberg presents the newly ordained SCJ priests.

“God is very good to us”

-Fr. Peter Surdel, provincial superior of South Africa

On Saturday, December 19, the South African Province celebrated the ordination of two SCJs to the priesthood. Frs. Ntsikelelo Bambatha and Joshua Morosi Mpiti are the first men to be ordained for the South African Province since 2002. Both are 28 years old.

Over 600 people took part in the ordination, which was held at Fr. Ntsikelelo's home parish of the Immaculate Conception in Burgersdorp. Earlier in the year the two professed their final vows at Fr. Joshua's home parish. Bishop Michael Wustenberg was the ordaining bishop.

“It is important to have the ordination in the home parish,” said Fr. Peter Surdel, SCJ, provincial superior of South Africa. He also served as novice master for the two young priests. “It allows the local people to be a part of the celebration. The inspiration and support of a vocation begins in the home parish. We have much to be thankful for in Fr. Ntsikelelo's parish; we want the people there to be a part of the celebration.”

Fr. Peter continued, noting that “This is a very exciting time for our province and for the SCJs.” The ordinations will allow the province to return to ministry at St. Theresa Mission in the Diocese of Aliwal North, a ministry

the province had to give up five years ago for lack of personnel. Fr. Anthony Austin, a retired SCJ, will mentor the new priests during their initial ministry.

St. Theresa's is a large parish that includes a high school of 1,300 students and a clinic. The clinic is staffed by the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa.

“God is very good to us,” said Fr. Peter. “In the parish half of the people speak Sesotho and half speak Xhosa. One of our new priests speaks Sesotho and one speaks Xhosa. It is Providence.”

After taking a bit of vacation time to visit with family the new priests started full-time ministry this month.

The U.S. Province was one of the founders of the South African Province. The U.S. Province continues to assist South Africa financially, and with personnel. Those who have recently served South Africa include Fr. Charles Brown, SCJ, who alternates semesters of teaching between South Africa and the United States, and Dr. Richard Lux, a professor at Sacred Heart School of Theology, who spent the first semester of the last academic year living with the SCJ formation community and teaching at St. Joseph's Theological Institute in Cedar.

SCJ NEWS

Devastation in Haiti, and close to home

The people of Haiti have been in the prayers of many since the nation suffered a devastating earthquake in January. Fr. José Ornelas Carvalho, SCJ, general superior, called on SCJs around the world to help with relief efforts. “We are motivated by a spirit of solidarity that must characterize us SCJs,” he wrote.

The U.S. Province has donated \$20,000 toward relief. This is on top of the many fund-raising efforts taking place in SCJ parishes and other ministries in the United States.

Close to home, disaster also hit the people of the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota who endured sub-zero temperatures and high winds without electricity, heat or drinking water after a winter storm knocked out power lines.

“There's been winters this bad before, but not with rain so bad it freezes the power lines and snaps the poles,” said Joseph Brings Plenty, the 38-year old chairman of the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe. The chairman was quoted in a *Wall Street Journal* article.

The province has many connections to the reservation. For years, the SCJs had a pastoral team based in Eagle Butte. The Sacred Heart Center, which includes a women's shelter and adolescent program, continues to operate in Eagle Butte with funding from St. Joseph's Indian School.

Certainly a few days without elec-



It has been a "ground breaking time" in the U.S. Province. Above, ground is broken for Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake (a retirement residence for SCJs and the lay public). Those with ceremonial shovels included Dn. David Nagel (far left) and Fr. Tom Cassidy (second from left). Below, Bishop Joseph Fiorenza (second from left), retired bishop of the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese joins Fr. Ed Kilianski (center), Fr. Joseph Dinh and Fr. Rick DiLeo at the ground-breaking for the new rectory at Our Lady of Guadalupe, Houston.

tricity is difficult, but several weeks after the storm many people were still without power or water. Residents with medical problems, especially those on dialysis, were temporarily moved to other areas.

Ground broken

In mid-December SCJs, co-workers, friends of the province and city officials from Franklin, Wis., gathered for a ceremonial ground-breaking ceremony for Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake. A few days later, the real thing took place.

As of February 1 the old convent has been razed, many of the trees have been taken down, and ground has been removed to make way for the foundation and a storm water retention pond.

Located across from Sacred Heart Monastery/ School of Theology, Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake will

include units for members of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (both retired and those in full-time ministry),



Ground-breaking for the new rectory at OLG, Houston.

as well as for the general public aged 55 and older. The development will grow in several phases with the first being the SCJ wing. It is hoped that members of the community will be able to move in by October 1. Units for the general public will be available in 2011.

To see photos from the ground-breaking, go to the SCJs' photo site at: www.scjusa.smugmug.com and click on the "Ground-breaking" gallery.

If you are interested in receiving information about rental units for the general public, please call 414-409-4848.

Ground breaking in Houston

Another ground-breaking also recently took place. This one was at Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Houston where a new rectory will be built. Retired Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza presided at the ceremony. Construction will take between seven and nine months. Fr. Ed Kilianski, SCJ, is pastor of OLG. The ground-breaking was in early January.

Former member of the Canadian Region dies

Fr. Gérard Wilhelmus Schoonebeek, SCJ, died on January 1; he had been a member of the Canadian Region for many years.

Fr. Gérard was born in Haarlem, The Netherlands, on September 14, 1923. He made his first profession on September 8, 1948, and was ordained on July 18, 1954. He was a missionary in Finland from 1955 to 1960 before coming to Canada. He served there for 47 years, working in a variety of roles, including as superior of the seminary at Pointe-au-Chêne (1962-1965), director of a youth center in the Diocese of Saint Hyacinthe, and as pastor of various parishes in the Diocese of Saint Jean-Longueuil (St. Thomas de Villeneuve, St. Isaac Jogues and St. Philippe-de-Laprairie).

He also served as provincial treasurer and on the provincial council of French-Canada. Fr. Gérard retired in Montreal in 2001 and in 2007, moved to Nijmegen (The Netherlands) where he died.

Bishop visits Mississippi Holly Family School

Bishop Joe Potocnak, SCJ, retired bishop of De Aar, South Africa, was a recent guest at Holy Family School in



In January, Bishop Joseph Potocnak visited with students and staff at Holy Family School in Holly Springs, Miss.

Holly Springs, Miss. He gave a presentation to students at the school during Holy Family's honors program.

Holy Family is operated by Sacred Heart Southern Missions. To learn more about the school, visit its website at: www.hfamilyschool.org

St. Joe's development director receives national award

Kory Christianson, St. Joseph Indian School's executive director of development, received the Max L. Hart Non Profit Achievement Award from the Direct Marketing Association's Nonprofit Federation (DMANF). The award was announced on January 25 and presented on January 29 during DMANF's

Washington Nonprofit Conference in Washington, D.C. The award recognizes outstanding achievement by an individual within the nonprofit community.

"When you look at the volatility of the stock market and economy over the past couple of years, it really is amazing what we at St. Joe's have been able to accomplish without giving up our big goals of improving staff training, remodeling the campus, and work at ways to benefit our students," said Fr. Stephen Huffstetter, SCJ. "It's a team effort for sure, and it's affirming when one of our own gets recognized for excellence in his field."

Christianson has worked at St. Joe's for over 16 years. As the executive director of development, he oversees the school's fund raising programs in the United States, Germany and France. In 1999 he became a Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE), and in 2000 was awarded the Charity Fundraising Executive of the Year Award by the National Federation of Non-Profits.

The Nonprofit Federation of the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) is the leading association for nonprofit organizations that use direct marketing channels such as mail, internet, email, phone, social networking to gain support from individual donors.

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