

The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY



The Year of Faith

WINTER 2012-2013

The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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The MESSENGER

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Provincial Perspective

Dear Family,

The observance of the Year of Faith began on Thursday, October 11, 2012, the 50th anniversary of the opening of Vatican Council II, which has changed us for the better. As we reflect on our faith in the coming months, or participate in programs observing the anniversary, may it arouse the aspiration to profess our Faith in fullness and with renewed conviction.

We find ourselves living in difficult and challenging times! What is in store for us? What was it like for Mary and Joseph to live out their lives, submitting to God's will? They questioned and feared what they could not understand. But their strong faith and trust in God helped them to live with courage. Looking at ourselves, no doubt we share some of their experiences.

The Holy Family is an example for us to keep a close relationship with God by praying daily and by loving and serving others. Making Jesus Christ the foundation of our lives will bring the gift of true peace to our families and renew our wearied hearts and minds.

Please refer to page 14. Available in English and Spanish, our new *Holy Family Prayer Book: Prayers for Every Family* will help you live out a grace-filled Year of Faith. I enthusiastically encourage you to order copies for your family and friends.

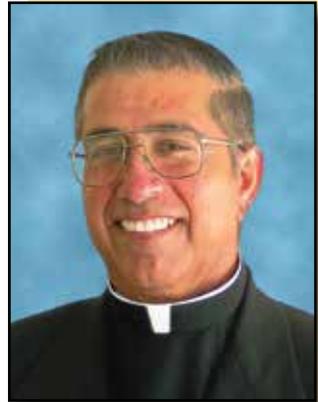
May this Year of Faith bring you to a deeper commitment to live *by faith*.

God bless you always.

Sincerely Yours in Jesus, Mary & Joseph,



Very Reverend Philip Sosa, M.S.F.
Provincial Superior



Very Rev. Philip Sosa, M.S.F.

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HOLY FAMILY LIFE

Praying with Your Spouse

by Matthew J. Kellner

My wife Barbara and I celebrated our 17th wedding anniversary in October 2012. Like a lot of couples, we don't always exchange anniversary gifts. However, I believe that we gave ourselves a much greater gift when we began the habit of praying together. We have always been blessed with a solid and joyful marriage, but when we began to pray as a married couple, the fruits of our efforts deepened our bond in ways unexpected.

When Barb and I were married, we received a book from Deacon George Miller (who is the deacon at St. Wenceslaus Parish in Saint Louis, Missouri) titled *Prayers for Married Couples* by Renee Bartkowski. I'm embarrassed to admit that it sat on my bookshelf for many years. Oh, I'd look at it now and then and think, "We really should start doing this," but never got around to it. After all, we always say grace before meals and we attend Sunday Mass. Isn't that enough? However, some developments happened that convinced me the Holy Spirit was calling us to something more.

Around 2005, the Archdiocese of Saint Louis began a study to determine which parishes in South St. Louis

would remain open and which would be closed and consolidated with other parishes. Then Archbishop Raymond L. Burke (now Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura in Rome) made the decision that St. Wenceslaus would remain open, but would change its status to that of a "personal parish" for those individuals who were attracted to the spirituality and charism of the Missionaries of the Holy Family. Father Jim Wuerth, pastor at St. Wenceslaus, frequently mentions this special charism at Mass.

The charism of the Missionaries of the Holy Family is threefold: the pastoral care of families, the encouragement of belated vocations, and the missionary aspect of the Church. I very much agree with Blessed Pope John Paul II that the family is the basic foundation, the very heart of the Church, and the cultural basis of society. Sadly, in America, the family is under constant assault with our emphasis on materialism, moral relativism, and the belief that the government is a substitute for fathers.

Another factor that was prodding me to enter into a deeper prayer life was the revival of *The Messenger* magazine by the late Very Reverend Joseph Roelke.

The Messenger features a perspective by the Provincial Superior, and it is full of resources for the family. There is a column by Dr. Ray Guarendi, a family psychologist; a response to a submitted question titled *Ask Father* by Father John Lombardi, M.S.F.; articles written by young and old alike who are actual parishioners at churches served by the

Barb and I eventually agreed that we should start praying together, and we dusted off the *Couples Praying Together* book, coupled (pun intended) with *Magnificat* devotions, a devotional from author Max Lucado, and a book from a friend's church minister titled *Creekside Chats* by Wendell Garrison. We also later joined the Friends of the



Barbara Kellner, "Fred Bird," and Matthew Kellner at the St. Wenceslaus Parish Festival in November 2012 in Saint Louis, Missouri.

Missionaries of the Holy Family; and Umberto the Unborn, a pro-life cartoon.

A feature that very much makes an impression on me is any article by or about the priests and brothers of the Missionaries of the Holy Family. These men are so humble, joyful, and filled with the Holy Spirit, and their stories are inspiring. The one thing that I always seem to learn from these men is their emphasis on the importance of a deep prayer life.

Missionaries of the Holy Family Prayer Association.

Reading prayers composed by others was easy, but, when we began to say our own prayers from the heart, it was awkward. As we persisted, praying from the heart is now natural and something I look forward to doing. The prayers are having a lot of positive impact on both of us. I've noticed that I handle with better composure events that would have set me off in

the past. Sure, I may still get annoyed, but I can express myself in a controlled manner and don't fly off the handle. I've observed that Barb has gained a confidence in herself that she didn't previously have. We both handle bad news better with the peace that God is in control, and this perspective enables us to have serenity as we turn things over to our Heavenly Father.

Being a Christian does not make life easy, but it does make life easier. Start praying today as a couple, and then with your children. In doing so, you'll be equipping your children with a foundation to handle whatever challenges will come their way. The youth and adults of America

face numerous challenges such as materialism, drugs, moral relativism, abortion, online access to pornography, and a general cultural attitude that there is no Truth.

Christians who pray together, encourage each other, attend Mass, and serve others trust in the Lord and know that nothing in this world can truly satisfy us. As we live in the United States and see the Culture of Death that surrounds us, we can still be joyful and thankful and live our lives with confidence in the optimism that:

“We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28) 



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Having a will is important. It provides the opportunity to have your decisions today help care for your loved ones in the future. It also provides the opportunity to support the Missionaries of the Holy Family with a bequest to secure our mission into the future. Legacy gifts are so special that we have the **Family Forever Society**. To receive a booklet on preparing your will and to learn more about the **Family Forever Society**, please write us at: Missionaries of the Holy Family, 3014 Oregon Avenue, Saint Louis, Missouri 63118-1412, or call us at 1-888-484-9945.

*If you are remembering the Missionaries of the Holy Family in your estate plans, please remember us as: **Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family – North American Province.***



YEAR OF FAITH

A Year of Faith to last Forever begins with an Act of Faith Today

by J.P. Richardson

What if you were a child, and you received a gift every day for a year, beginning this morning?

Not ice cream for breakfast, which would melt while you ate it and be forgotten by lunch, but a lovely, sweet rosebud on your pillow when you awake, that keeps opening all day and will still be blooming tomorrow?

A Year of Faith is like a year of Christmas and Easter each day. A Christmas present every midnight, an Easter basket every sunrise. "Christ is born, Christ is risen, Christ will come again."

God gives us a daily gift: Faith. He gives us the Garden of His Church at the beginning of each day, as He gave Adam and Eve His Garden of Eden at the beginning of our human story. Do we pick even His littlest dandelion to give back to Him as our thanks?



YEAR OF FAITH 2012
2013

In Oscar Wilde's story, *The Selfish Giant*, the children want to play forever in the giant's beautiful garden, but the giant expels them. God invites us to play and pray in His Garden. Will we stay, or will we stray and go our way into weeds and wilds?

What is faith? We read in Hebrews 11:1: "Faith is the realization of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen." How can we know that "things unseen" are real? By their effects. Think of the wind, electricity, gravity, magnetism... God, Who is everywhere.

Faith, like hope and love, is a virtue that we should exercise until it becomes a habit. Does that mean we don't think, but behave like zombies? Think again. Faith could feed our minds forever.

Faith, hope, and love are gifts of grace

from God. They go together. Our faith works in love, and we love in faith. Faith *is* a work – an act of faith. “So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love,” St. Paul writes. Why is love the greatest? St. John writes, “God is love.” We cannot separate faith, hope, and love. Yet, for us, faith comes first.

Pope Benedict XVI proclaimed a Year of Faith from October 11, 2012, until November 24, 2013. Why? To celebrate 50 years since Blessed Pope John XXIII opened the Second Vatican Council. We also celebrate 20 years since Blessed Pope John Paul II published the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and 500 years since Michelangelo completed his painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

The Year of Faith reminds us that the Catholic Faith is neither so new that we can tailor it to suit ourselves, nor too old to suit us any more. St. Augustine called God, “O Beauty, ever ancient, ever new.” Faith, too, is both daily and timeless.

Faith is like a door, open always to all. God will not lunge from behind the door to grab and drag us, unwillingly, inside. Blessed Pope John Paul II, years ago, wrote a book entitled *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. This year, we can – by freely choosing – cross the threshold of faith.

The Year of Faith should become a Lifetime of Faith, which should become an Eternity – a Forever – of Faith. A year is made of months, weeks, days and hours. Each day could begin with

a Moment of Faith: praying an Act of Faith.

“O my God, I firmly believe all the sacred truths which Your Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches, because You have revealed them, Who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.”

Many people seem to believe that we can please God by pleasing ourselves. The Year of Faith reassures us that only the truth pleases God, now and forever.

Has God changed? Has the Church changed some teachings? Must she change some others? The teachings, in their truth, do not change. The Faith is substance that endures, a great solid rock in a wind-whirled, storm-wild sea.

Are our personal consciences our supreme guides for thinking and doing? What if they contradict what God reveals? We must do what our consciences dictate, but we must ask God to help us form our consciences so that they dictate God’s will. We must obey God, rather than human beings, including ourselves. “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” says Jesus. Faith means never needing to ask “Why?”

Some eyes develop cataracts, gradually blurring and darkening vision. If the cataracts are removed, the person might rejoice in the surprising brilliance of light and vividness of color! Faith, too, can become dim and weak.

We can forget what we saw “with eyes of faith” as children. Jesus says: “Unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of Heaven.” Like children again, we have faith again.

God and the Faith were there all along, even if we lost our sight and had forgotten.

“Keep hope alive!” is a popular slogan. We must keep faith and love alive, too. Who taught us the Faith? Our parents, grandparents, teachers, priests, sisters, and brothers? Do we have faith? OK, then, let’s do it!

This year, let’s work on habits of faith. Ask for God’s blessing. Thank God. Be inspired by faithful people in the Bible and by the faith of the saints. Ask them to pray for us. Pray for the souls in Purgatory. Go to Confession and Mass; receive Communion. Study the *Catechism*. Pray at meals. Pray the Rosary. Profess the Creed. Keep the Commandments.

Do works of mercy. Imitate the Holy Family. The Church’s ancient “deposit of faith” holds countless treasures to draw from; we might add new habits.

After we are gone from this world, will people say that we kept faith, hope, and love alive?

After we are gone from this world, will people say that we kept faith, hope, and love alive?

In the movie *It’s a Wonderful Life*, the angel Clarence says to Mr. Bailey: “You’ve been given a great gift, George: a chance to see what the world would be like without you.”

To see what a great gift we’ve been given in this Year of Faith, imagine a year *without* faith. 

Mr. J.P. Richardson, a freelance writer from Saint Paul, Minnesota, has worked for many years in Pro-Life ministries.



Pieta Votive Candles

This beautiful Pieta statue is in St. Wenceslaus Church in Saint Louis, Missouri, and in the rectory are the offices of the North American Province of the Missionaries of the Holy Family. If you would like us to light a seven-day votive candle and pray for your family and your intentions, please use the return envelope stapled in the middle of this magazine. The suggested donation is \$7.00. May God bless you.



A PROFILE OF SERVICE



Reflections on a First Anniversary

by Father Robert DeLong, M.S.F.

“Is it a year already?” Those who’ve had a special event in their lives – a new job, a marriage, or in my case ordination to the priesthood – know this expression well. It seems that time has passed so quickly that we hardly had time to adjust to our new status.

On December 30, 2011, the Feast of the Holy Family, I was ordained to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ as a Missionary of the Holy Family. I had been a religious brother for several years before this great event. Reflecting on my first anniversary as a priest, I am hard pressed to remember life before priesthood. It seems, on the one hand, that I have always been a priest, yet on the other hand, I still have a hard time believing that I am actually a priest. I am in awe that I have been chosen for

this task. It’s like winning the Powerball Lottery (without the cash of course!).

So much has happened during this first year that it is impossible to describe all of the high points, although one of the best has to be celebrating Mass for our entire community during our annual retreat. Needless to say, this was also one of the most intimidating as I was the “new kid,” and sitting before me were fellow priests who had celebrated, cumulatively, thousands of Masses over the years. To say that I was nervous would be the understatement of the century.

The support of the members of my religious community, as well as that of our many benefactors and friends, has been most valuable. I know you have heard this many times over the

years, but believe me when I say that I never would have made it without your prayers. The support of the faithful for a new priest has been awesome, and if I have not told you already I tell you now: **"THANK YOU ALL!"** (Or, for those in Texas: Y'ALL.)

As I fall asleep many nights, my last thoughts are: "I am a priest! Wow!" I am not worthy of this, none of us are, but when God has called us to

this life it is an honor to serve Him and His people. I am humbled at the prospect of being HIS priest. I am a priest forever.

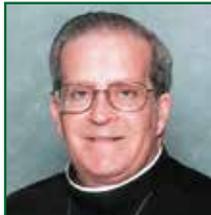
Please keep all of our priests and brothers in your prayers, as we shall keep you in ours. We are strengthened by your prayers and support; it is a shared ministry. God bless you all (y'all). 

Men of God: Religious Forever

In this Year of Our Lord 2013, four priests and two brothers of the Missionaries of the Holy Family are celebrating anniversaries of their ordination or religious vows.



Fr. Philip Sosa, M.S.F.
45 years



Br. Rolland Kapsner, M.S.F.
40 years



Fr. Andrea Spatafora, M.S.F.
30 years



Br. John Griffin, M.S.F.
10 years



Fr. Camillo Botello, M.S.F.
10 years



Fr. Robert DeLong, M.S.F.
1 year

We thank God for our priests and brothers, and we beseech Him to send us many more. If you would like to send a Tribute Gift in honor of one or more of these Men of God, please use the envelope found in the middle of this magazine. Thank you and God bless your family!



PARENTS' TIME-OUT

Time vs. Money

Contributed by Dr. Ray Guarendi

In sharing his thoughts on money and childrearing, Stan from Hawaii said philosophically, "It is more important to have a high level of living than a high standard of living."

Marilyn from Oregon agreed. "Buying things is no substitute for time and love. Kids can't be fooled. They would much rather have us attend their school program, for example, than miss it because we are working late so they can wear a designer label on their clothes."

Seconding this perception wholeheartedly was a daughter from Washington. "Mom and dad made a mutual decision that mom would be a housewife. They sacrificed the tangibles, like a pool, new cars, or a boat for things that mean so much more, like spending time with their children and nurturing their growth."

One mother's opinion on overdoing the tangibles was blunt. "The more you give to children materially, the less they appreciate." On the other hand, she's noticed that the more time you give to children, the more they appreciate it.

If you are unable to provide your children the standard of living that you'd like, or the one that they'd like you to think they'd like, you needn't feel guilty whatsoever, according to these parents

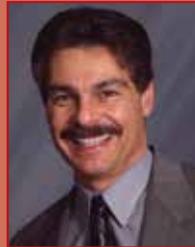
and their youngsters. It is time that heads children's list of most precious parental gifts. Whether you're short or long on money, the more you give of you, the less your kids will care about worldly goods or any lack thereof.

Time is the essence of parenthood.

Time is the cornerstone upon which a family's well-being is built. Involvement, presence, availability – words that signify a parent's commitment to family life. Giving quality time in quantity improves every aspect of one's home life. That's worth more than money, proven time after time. 

Back to the Family, p. 131-132.

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Dr. Ray Guarendi

The father of 10, Dr. Ray is a psychologist and a popular TV and radio personality and guest speaker offering parenting advice in concert with Catholic values. More information about Dr. Ray's books and DVDs can be found on the internet at www.DrRay.com.



YOUTHFUL OUTLOOK

Baby

by Angelica Guerra, 15

There are many reasons why I love attending Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in New Braunfels, Texas, but the most important reason is the Pro-Life emphasis. Every last Wednesday of the month is a special Pro-Life Mass. On Sundays at Mass, we pray for an end to abortion.

I was recently assigned a project to write on a topic of my choosing, so I chose the subject of abortion. I wrote a short story about abortion and how I feel about it. I was inspired by the book, *Angel in the Waters*, by Regina Doman. Following are excerpts from my short story of a baby's journey in her mother's womb.

Darkness. Opening my eyes, I see darkness. I stretch my arms and try to feel what else is here with me. My hand bumps up against something. Smooth. I put both my hands on it and just stare at it hoping the name will come to me. It doesn't. I leave my hands where they are and continue to think about what this strange thing is.

"Mother. The word that you are looking for is Mother," a voice says. I draw my hands back to my sides. "Have no fear, baby; I am a friend. I will never hurt you." Deciding to trust it, I say, "Where did you say that I am?" "You are inside



Angelica Guerra, parishioner at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in New Braunfels, Texas.

Mother," Friend says. "Mother? What is this Mother?" I ask.

"Don't be afraid. You are safe where you are. Mother is not a what or a where but a *who*. A mother is a person who loves you no matter what. A mother will never hurt you, never leave you. She will always be there for you. You will meet her when you are born. But for now, dear baby, sleep." Then, silence. "Mother," I whisper to myself and fall asleep.

I am awake now. "Touch her," Friend says. I move my head around looking for Friend, wondering where he is, but

happy that he's there. "What?" I ask. "Put your hand on her side and see what happens." "Okay," I respond.

Hesitantly, I put my hand against Mother again. I slowly push my hand closer to it as if I am trying to go through it. Then a weird thing happens. Something pushes back. Pulling my hand back as fast as I can, I exclaim, "What was that?!"

"Mother; she knows that you're here," Friend says. "Really?" I reply, "When do I get to meet her?" "You will get to meet her when you are born," Friend explains.

"Friend?" I ask, "Who are you?" Laughing softly, Friend says, "I am an angel, dear baby. And don't worry, you will get to meet me later, face-to-face. But for now, dear one, you need to sleep, and I will come back." I sleep and dream of Mother, wondering what she looks like. I hope Friend will stay with me forever, even after I am born.

All of a sudden, I am jolted awake. There is a new feeling inside me... it is fear. I look around searching for my Friend. I stop, and the feeling of fear tangles my stomach into a knot. What if this is it? What if I am being born?

The thought is so exciting I stop struggling, but then it feels all wrong because it hurts, and Friend didn't mention anything about it hurting. I didn't choose this! This is all wrong! I instantly know that I am not being born, that something else must be happening.

"FRIEND!" I shout, desperate for help. I shout again and again. "Help me!"

And then I remember the other person Friend said would always be there to help me.

"MOTHER!" Pain explodes in my right arm. This is bad, really bad! I move up the wall of mother and begin to kick her with everything I have, but it doesn't help. Now the pain is in my other arm. It hurts so badly, but I keep kicking, hoping she will notice and help me.

"**MOMMY! Help me!** Where are you?" I shout as I kick again. "You're not supposed to leave me! You're not supposed to hurt me!" I kick until I cannot kick anymore. Mother is ignoring me. Why won't she help me?

"Momma..." I cry again, but my voice is weak. I keep murmuring her name as my eyelids begin to close... no, I don't want to go, not like this. There is pressure in my head, so much pressure I can't keep my eyes open. The pressure in my head begins to grow... I cannot hold on... there is nothing, no one to hold me. I close my eyes and whisper, over and over, "Momma, Momma, Momma..."

I open my eyes again, and I am wrapped in something warm. I don't know where I am. There is something here that hurts my eyes. What is it? Oh! It's light! This must be what light is! I look around at my new surroundings and everything is light. I look up, realizing that someone is holding me. Friend! He's here! He came back! Just like he said he would! But something's wrong because his cheeks are wet.

"What's wrong?" I ask, "Where's

Mother? Am I born? And, where were you when I cried for you!?" "I was there, dear baby, I was there," He responds. "Then why didn't you answer me?" I ask. "Because I was on the outside with Mother," Friend explains.

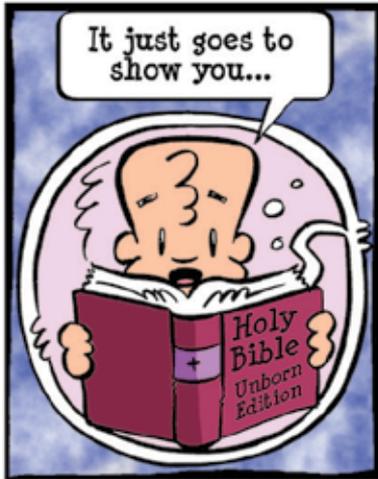
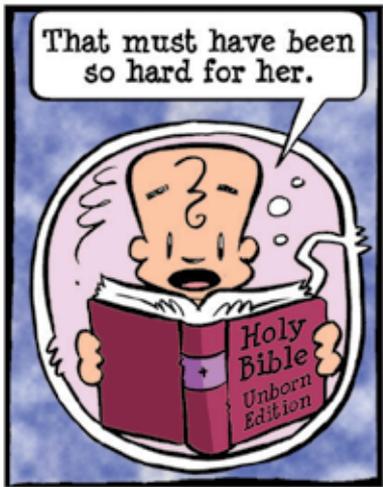
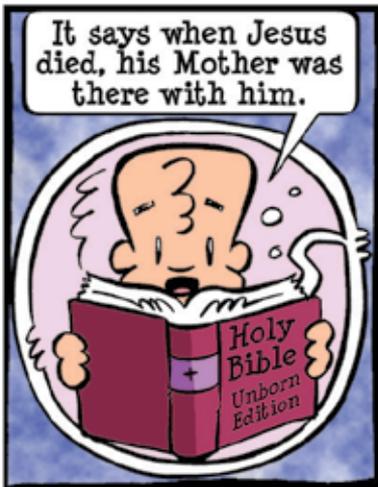
"Mother! Where is she? When do I get to meet her!" Friend's cheeks get wetter as he says, "Baby, dear baby, Mother

made a horrible, terrible decision. And because of it you, will not get to meet her until much, much later." "Why? What did she do? What happened to me?"

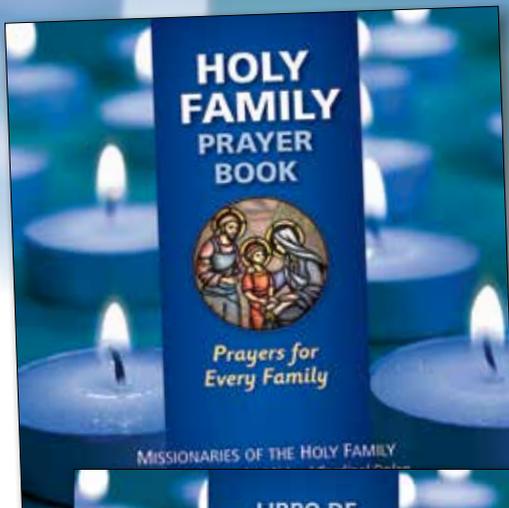
"By the time I got there, it was too late. She decided not to meet you; she decided that you will never be born."



Umbert the Unborn by Gary Cangemi



New Prayer Books, Devotions



Holy Family Prayer Book

Prayers for Every Family
Missionaries of the Holy Family

Foreword by
Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan

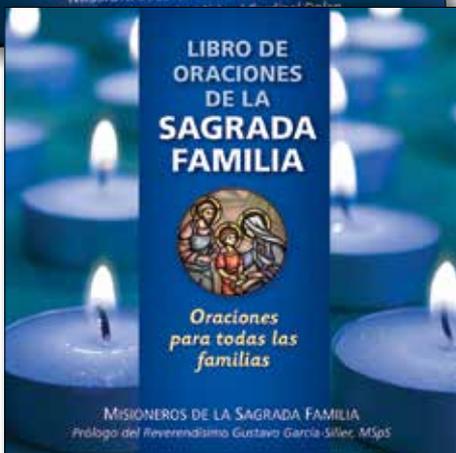
This simple prayer book, devoted to the Holy Family, offers traditional and original prayers dedicated to helping families today. Included in *The Holy Family Prayer Book* are a variety of prayers that will help families stay spiritually grounded and ever-present in faith.

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Misioneros De La Sagrada Familia

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VOCATIONS

Take the Time, Please

In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 15, we find the Elders questioning Jesus as to why His disciples did not wash their hands before they sat down for supper. Jesus' response to them was that they were so caught up in their own "traditions" that they failed to recognize Him, the Savior, in their midst. Jesus lets them know that their priorities are out of order. They can respect their traditions, but they must first discern what's most important in their lives.

When we consider the priorities in our own lives, have we ever thought about how God calls us to serve Him? Maybe we are already caught up in service to God and His Church through other ministries, or maybe, through our example, we are witnesses in the work place. Do we feel satisfied in our lives? Do we feel that greater strides could be accomplished by us for God, if we only took the time to discern our priorities?

Have we ever really considered the Religious Life? Maybe God wants us to make an adjustment in our priorities. Are you willing to recognize this vocation in your life? You won't know the answer to this question unless you search your heart and give the possibility of a religious vocation a real honest consideration.

In this way, we are discerning what's most important to God in serving Him and His people, unlike the Pharisees and Scribes. If you would like to discern the possibility of a religious vocation, please give us a call, and let us walk together on the road to religious life: **(888) 484-9945.** 

Father Mario Galindo, M.S.F.
Vocation Director

Father Jim Wasser, M.S.F.
Formation Director



Father Mario Galindo, M.S.F. visited with some senior students from Christian Brothers College High School (CBC) in Saint Louis, Missouri after his vocation presentations in October 2012.

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Vocation Nomination

He has the spark of a priest...

1(888) 4-THY-WILL www.MSF-America.org

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Nominee Contact Information:

_____ Adult
First & Last Name _____ or
Youth

Street Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone _____

Parish Name (if known) _____

Your Contact Information (required):

First & Last Name _____

Street Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone _____

Parish Name _____



PARISH SPOTLIGHT

Our Church Family: Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Our Lady of Perpetual Help is a parish in New Braunfels, Texas, and the pastor is a priest of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, Father Camillo Botello, M.S.F., who is celebrating his 10th year as an ordained Priest of Jesus Christ.



*God bless you, Father Camillo, and your parish family
at Our Lady of Perpetual Help!*



DEAR FATHER

Ask Father John

by Father John Carl Lombardi, M.S.F.

Q: *Dear Father,* *Where did the Bible come from and was the Catholic Church responsible for its present form?*

A: The Bible didn't fall out of the sky from heaven in a neatly wrapped package in the form we now have and use. The word "Bible" in the plural, *biblia* (Greek), means a collection of books. In fact, they were originally written on scrolls, and when ancient manuscripts appeared in book form, it was called a Codex. Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Sinaiticus, and Codex Vaticanus are a few of the well known ones.

Sacred Scriptures has one author, God. Yet God made use of human authors through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, using each author's literary style. Some authors we can identify; others, the identity of the writer has been lost to history. In fact, we don't have any autograph copies of any of the manuscripts – that is, the original manuscripts – they are all copies.

Many, many ancient books claimed to be divinely inspired. But only 73 made the "canon," literally, the "measuring stick" which judges which books are divinely inspired

and those that are not divinely inspired.

The "Magisterium," the authoritative teaching office of the Catholic Church, has the legitimate right to make such decisions. This is scriptural, going back to Jesus Christ giving the keys to the kingdom of heaven to Saint Peter, our first pope (Matthew 16).

In the Decree of the Council of Rome (382 A.D.), the first ecclesiastical decree on the canonical books of Sacred Scripture, the books that make up the Bible became official.

It is exactly the same canon used today by the Catholic Church.

Protestant bibles began appearing in the 16th century with a different number of books. In response to the Protestant "Reformation," the Catholic Church's Council of Trent, 1545 - 1563 A.D., solemnly reaffirmed and defined that Catholics were to accept – as inspired and part of revelation – all 46 books of the Old Testament, in addition to the 27 books of the New Testament.

And once the canon was closed on these 73 books, nothing could be removed or added. In fact, Martin Luther tried to have the *Letter of James* in the New Testament removed because it interfered with his self-imposed “doctrine” of sola fide (by faith only), but he was unsuccessful.

It is in the Old Testament that Catholics differ with our Protestant brothers and sisters on the number of books. We have 46 books, and they have 39 books. They do not recognize the books of Baruch, Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes, and they call these books “apocryphal” (literally, hidden, thus unknown), but Catholics call them “deuterocanonical” (literally, second canon) books.

During the “Reformation,” the Protestants began using the *Hebrew Bible* as their canon for translating the Old Testament, which would not accept anything written in Greek (the seven books not in their canon).

The Catholic Church used the “Septuagint” (LXX) as their canon, and this is why there is a difference in the number of books. It depended on which canon was used for translation. The Protestants used the *Hebrew Bible* in translating the Old Testament, which does not contain these apocryphal or deuterocanonical books.

Catholics believe in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition in developing our doctrines. Protestants, because of another of Martin Luther’s self-imposed “doctrines” on sola scriptura (only scripture), have one source, Scripture.

Keep in mind that the Church, not Scripture, is the pillar and foundation of truth (see 1 Timothy 3:15).

Keep in mind that the Church, not Scripture, is the pillar and foundation of truth (see 1 Timothy 3:15). Therefore, the Catholic Church has the legitimate authority to define the canon and interpret Sacred Scripture.

The Catholic Church played a very important role in developing the Bible that we are using today, especially since it came from the Holy Spirit working through the Catholic Church. 



Father John Lombardi, M.S.F., a retired priest of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, lives at Padua Place in San Antonio, Texas.



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Thank You & God Bless You, to everyone who made a financial gift in the 2012 calendar year.

We, the priests and brothers of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, extend our deep gratitude to all our benefactors.

You are remembered in our prayers.

Around The Province...



▲ Father Jim Wasser, M.S.F. and Father Mario Galindo, M.S.F. share a laugh with some of the attendees and helpers at the Come & See Vocation Retreat Weekend in October 2012 at the beautiful Ave Maria Retreat Center in Danville, Illinois: www.avemariaretreatcenter.org.



UNITED IN CHRIST

Come, Holy Spirit

by Father F. A. Eka Yuantoro, M.S.F.

On October 8, 2012, we began our Annual Retreat for all members of the North American Province of the Missionaries of the Holy Family at the Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio, Texas. It was also Father Robert DeLong's birthday, a very special day for him! Father Daniel

The Holy Spirit, or Ruah in Hebrew, is always working to bring salvation to the people of God who believe in Jesus Christ. If we look in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 1, we see that the Holy Spirit was active before Jesus Christ was born. The Holy Spirit was dwelling within the Virgin Mary, and when



Renaud, O.M.I. (Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate) was the retreat master.

The topic for our retreat was: Creative Mission in the Spirit. We were asked before our retreat, "For what graces are you asking?" This question was intended to help us reflect more deeply about ourselves and our relationship with God the Father.

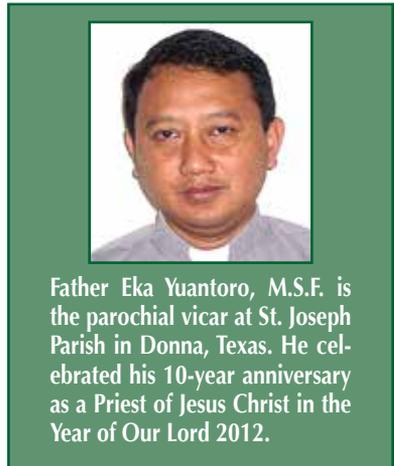
Mary visited Elizabeth, the Holy Spirit came and dwelt within her, too. The Holy Spirit brings something new to our lives. He gives power and strength. He is like energy, a fire, a tempest, a source of light, and a divine embrace. So we asked the Holy Spirit to come and renew our religious community.

Fire of love is an encounter of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel to the People of God. Jesus, the Son

and Missionary of the Father, showed us that the Holy Trinity is a family, a symbol of community. Jesus said that He and His Father are one, and they give their Spirit for us. In the Acts of the Apostles after Pentecost, Peter and all the disciples dared to proclaim the Gospel. We reflected on Acts 2:42-47 and Acts 4:32, realizing that community comes first, and then Jesus sends His disciples into the world.

During our retreat, we had the opportunity to reconcile with one another and to receive the Sacrament of Confession. We also discussed discernment and evaluation of the Spirit, as well as the distinction between charism and talent. Charism is always positive and brings fullness of salvation because it is the working of the Holy Spirit. Within a charism, people use their talents, but talents can be misused, so discernment is necessary to recognize the true activity of the Holy Spirit.

As a community, we enjoyed our time together as we discussed business, programs, and how to take care of our elderly priests and brothers. We will have our Chapter Meeting and our Annual Retreat at the Oblate Renewal Center in 2013, too. This enables Father John Lombardi, M.S.F. and Brother John Griffin, M.S.F., who live at the Padua Place retirement home in San Antonio, to participate with us in our programs. See you soon! God bless you! 



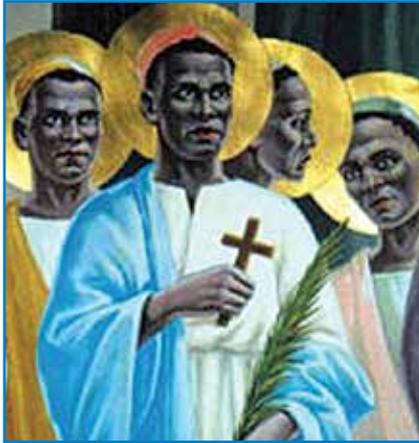
Around The Province...



◀ After the Annual Apostolate Board Meeting in San Antonio in October 2012, Dr. Mark Hickman, board member, and his lovely wife Elsa enjoyed time with members of the Missionaries of the Holy Family.



HEROES URGENTLY NEEDED



Saint Charles Lwanga: A Saint for Our Troubled Times

by Maurice Prater, Advancement Director

“The marriage bond, in which man and woman together constitute a life-long association, ordered by its very nature for the good of the spouses and the generation and education of children is the basis of the family, the heritage and shared wealth of humanity. Thus, the Church cannot cease to announce that, in accordance with God’s plans, marriage and the family are irreplaceable and admit no alternatives.”

Pope Benedict XVI, 6 June 2005

Letter to the Pontifical Council of the Family

According to Christ’s Vicar on marriage and the family, “Admit no alternatives.” However, in light of the morally devastating election results of November 2012, Maine, Washington, and Maryland voted to legalize homosexual marriage, while Minnesota struck down a measure that would have outlawed it.

A saint we should invoke for his intercession in helping our nation reject immorality and sexually perverse behavior is Saint Charles Lwanga. His feast day is June 3, and his story is told below from the website of Franciscan Media:

One of 22 Ugandan martyrs, Charles

Lwanga is the patron of youth and Catholic action in most of tropical Africa. He protected his fellow pages (aged 13 to 30) from the homosexual demands of the Bagandan ruler, Mwanga, and encouraged and instructed them in the Catholic faith during their imprisonment for refusing the ruler's demands.

For his own unwillingness to submit to the immoral acts, and for his efforts to safeguard the faith of his friends, Charles was burned to death at Namugongo on June 3, 1886, by Mwanga's order.

Charles first learned of Christ's teachings from two retainers in the court of

Chief Mawulugungu. While a catechumen, he entered the royal household as assistant to Joseph Mukaso, head of the court pages.

On the night of Mukaso's martyrdom for encouraging the African youths to resist Mwanga, Charles requested and received Baptism. Imprisoned with his friends, Charles's courage and belief in God inspired them to remain chaste and faithful.

When Pope Paul VI canonized these 22 martyrs on October 18, 1964, he referred to the Anglican pages martyred for the same reason. 

“...females exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the males likewise gave up natural relations with females and burned with lust for one another. Males did shameful things with males and thus received in their own persons the due penalty for their perversity. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God handed them over to their undiscerning mind to do what is improper... Although they know the just decree of God that all who practice such things deserve death, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”

Romans 1:26-32

Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection.

Catechism of the Catholic Church #2359

When it comes to marriage and the family, “admit no alternatives.”
Saint Charles Lwanga, pray for us!

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Pope Benedict XVI's Prayer Intentions

January 2013

General Intention: That during this “Year of Faith,” Christians may deepen their knowledge of the mystery of Christ and joyfully bear witness to the gift of faith in Him.

Missionary Intention: That the Christian communities of the Middle East, which frequently suffer discrimination, may receive the strength of fidelity and perseverance of the Holy Spirit.

February 2013

General Intention: That migrant families, in particular, mothers, may be sustained and accompanied in their difficulties.

Missionary Intention: That peoples experiencing war and conflicts may be the protagonists in the building of a future of peace.

March 2013

General Intention: That respect for nature will grow, with the awareness that all creation is the work of God entrusted to human responsibility.

Missionary Intention: That bishops, priests, and deacons may be tireless “proclaimers” of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

April 2013

General Intention: That the prayerful and public celebration of the faith may be a source of life for the faithful.

Missionary Intention: That the particular Churches in mission territories may be a sign and instrument of hope and resurrection.

May 2013

General Intention: That those who administer justice will always act with integrity and upright conscience.

Missionary Intention: That seminarians, especially from mission Churches, may always be pastors according to the heart of Christ, fully devoted to the proclamation of the Gospel.

June 2013

General Intention: That a culture of dialogue, listening, and reciprocal respect may prevail among the nations.

Missionary Intention: That in the areas where the influx of secularization is strongest, Christian communities may learn to effectively promote a new evangelization.

Around The Province...



Students and staff of Vacation Bible School 2012, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Seguin, Texas, gather in the cafeteria for one of their favorite activities... lunch!



THE POETRY CORNER

The Talking Snowflake

© Father James Wasser, M.S.F., Formation Director

Early one morning, as the snow began to fall,
A beautiful snowflake invited me with this call:
Come watch us with your eyes and behold our making,
For we have for you a message breathtaking.

Look out at the fields and see all my friends,
As a quilt of white we all do blend.
Over in the corner, my sisters do lay
In their emerald glitter for the sun to display.

Now falls Uncle Tom, the eldest of our clan.
He's landed on top of a fence post, a very funny snowflake man.
Look! There falls Cousin Billy,
A chubby, little snowflake who's really quite silly.

Oh, my heavens! Here comes Aunt Sarah.
She's the prettiest of snowflakes with her silver tiara.
Oh, my gosh! Look out from above!
Down falls Big Freddy whom we all love.

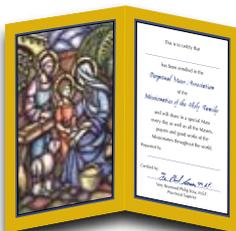
Just look at them all, the entire family's here.
God sent them to you to spread His good cheer.
We have fallen for you, so take heart my friend,
For we'll be around till winter does end.

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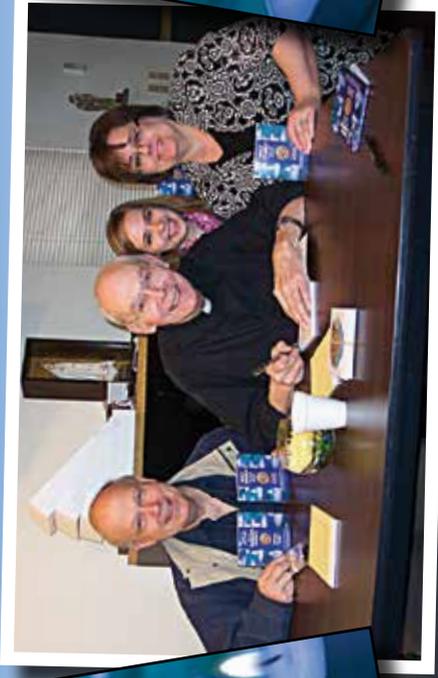
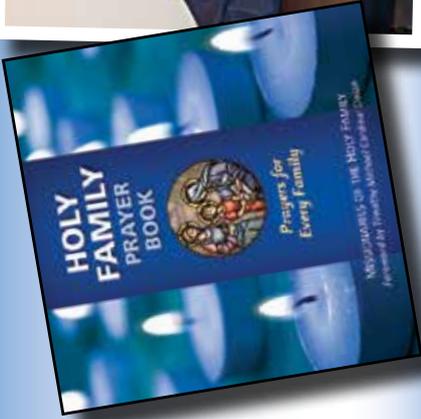
Perpetual Mass Enrollments are available immediately on our website, www.MSF-America.org - click on "Prayer and the Holy Family" - look for Perpetual Mass. You can also call our office at 1-888-484-9945.



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