

The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

LENT 2005



The Annunciation of the Lord held on a special day April 4, 2005.

The MESSENGER

LENT 2005 THE HOLY FAMILY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Provincial Perspective	3
Apostolate Up-Close	4
Mission Reflections	8
Holy Family Life	12
Around the Province	16
Vocational Thoughts	18
Parents Time-Out	22
Youthful Outlook	25
A Profile of Service	27

Copyright © 2005 The Messenger of the Holy Family is published semi-annually and is owned and operated by the **Missionaries of the Holy Family**, 3014 Oregon Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118-1498 www.MSF-America.org

Publisher: Very Rev. Joseph Roelke, M.S.F.

Editor: Mr. Guy Parasch

Designer: Mr. Michael Dominguez,
D.D. Design

Printer: Robert Mirabal, Printers Unlimited
www.printersunlimited.com

Cover Artwork:

"The Annunciation",
Fr. Henry vd Boogaard, M.S.F.

Inside Cover Photo:

Digital Stock

Provincial... Perspective

LENT 2005

Dear Readers:

In the midst of the Season of Lent I am reminded of a man I met several years ago. He called himself a "re-formist". Most people in the neighborhood called him the "junk collector." This elderly man would collect scrap metal, broken glass, rotten wood, hubcaps.... you name it. He would look at these items of "junk" and turn them into works of art, often times selling them back to the same people a few weeks later. One day he told me "I see things most people call "junk" and my talent is to re-form them to something beautiful."

In this Season of Lent we are all called to be Re-Formists. To take a good look at ourselves and separate the "good" we do from the "junk" To turn the "junk" (sins, faults, failings) over to Jesus. It is Jesus who brought our "junk" to the Cross so that we could become a New Creation.

Jesus says "Reform your lives, believe in the Good News". This is the work of Lent.

This is only possible with the help of God. God sees in us a beauty that we often do not see. May we allow God to enter our lives this Lent in order to bring out the real beauty present in each one of us.

My old friend, the "junk dealer", is now gone from this earth; but his works of art live on to remind people that we too can become a New Creation with the help of God.

May God bless you with a generous, loving, and caring heart.

Fr. Joseph Roelke, M.S.F.

Very Rev. Joseph Roelke, M.S.F.
Provincial



Very Rev. Joseph Roelke, MSF

Apostolate Board

Mr. Martie Aboussie

Mr. Harry Fabick

Mr. James Grouchy

Mr. John Harper

Mr. Walter Lukaszek

Mr. Paul Mahabir

Mrs. Gracie Mirabal Martinez

Mr. Robert Mirabal, Jr.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Very Rev. Joseph Roelke, M.S.F.
Provincial

Rev. Andrea Spatafora, M.S.F.
Vicar

Rev. James Wuerth, M.S.F.
Second Assistant

Rev. Philip Sosa, M.S.F.
Third Assistant



The Priesthood—My First Year

By **Rev. Camillo Botello, MSF** who was ordained to the priesthood in October 2003.

Eight long years had passed since I first entered formation with the Missionaries of the Holy Family. During those years I had prayed and studied for the moment to do my priestly ministry in the parish. I would bring what I had learned in school and apply it to all the things that would be needed in the parish. I had so much that I wanted to share with God's people. We would all work together in spiritual bliss. "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations..." (Matt. 28: 19). The zeal of the newly ordained is soon met with the reality of parish ministry. I had paid little attention to Archbishop Flores' warning; "your Good Friday has begun".

I was assigned as Parochial Vicar of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Seguin, Texas where I had been assigned a couple of summers before and the people were familiar to me. I was given a very

warm reception. I was ready to go to work. Fr. David Tonary, M.S.F. helped me to make the transition very smoothly. He pointed out the different areas of ministries in the parish. The size of the parish was overwhelming; but, this was what I had been looking forward to doing. I felt that this was an exciting time



Rev. Joseph Roelke, MSF Provincial with Fr. Camillo Botello (r) as he begins his first year as a priest.

to be a priest. I could see the spiritual hunger of the people.

I had plans to begin a bible study course. Many of the people encouraged me to begin this program in the parish. I looked around

and studied the possibility, but as of yet I have not been able to begin a program. Theology School did not prepare me for the demands on my time and all the different events in the parish. I try to give as much as I can to the people, but I find that there are not enough hours in the day to do all the things that I want to accomplish. I seem to be running from one thing to the next. I go out to anoint someone at the hospital and visit another patient

found it difficult to try and accomplish the many things which I felt were needed. I have discovered instead that ministry is not about the number of programs that one can implement, but example that we can be to the people.

Evangelization is about living the "Good News". Going out to the hospital to visit a sick person or to anoint them has shown me that my time is not wasted. I am able to bring God's comfort and concern to people who are in need. This is not to say, that having three different calls from three different nursing homes, can be tiring and a little frustrating. Through it all, I find great spiritual growth in the process.

I have found that things do not always go the way that you had them planned. I discovered this at my first Funeral Mass. The Mass had been going smoothly. At the final doxology; the point in the Mass when the priest elevates the paten and the cup and says "through him, with him and in him...", I look up and there is a smoky haze at the top of the church. The fire alarms begin to go off and I have to try and calm the people down and ask them to please exit the building. We found out later, that a bird had built a nest in the exhaust pipe of the heating system which caused the fire. We proceeded to the cemetery and had a nice service at the grave site. It took a few more funerals



Fr. Camillo Botello's first homily as a priest.

at the nursing home and have to rush back to meet with an appointment that had been set up a week before. It is very easy to lose track of which day of the week it is. I wanted to come out and make a difference immediately. I have

“In God’s time and not in mine has been one of the most important lessons I have learned”

before I became comfortable with celebrating another one. I was able to clearly see that my ministry is not about what I do but what God does.

Our Lady of Guadalupe parish seems to be going through a baby boom. There are approximately fifteen to twenty baptisms a month. The baptism takes place after the twelve o’clock Mass. It is a wonderful experience to witness all these young babies and children becoming members of the Catholic Church. I worry and I pray that these parents and godparents will

take their responsibilities seriously. It is a great feeling when I see all these screaming kids get quiet after they are baptized. I go home tired but refreshed in the knowledge that this is why I was called to ordained ministry.

The sacramental life of the parish is very fulfilling. I enjoy celebrating Mass and watching us struggle through the liturgy. There are times when we don’t have a choir and I have to try and sing. I say try, because anyone who has heard me sing knows that it can be a very trying time. After choosing, “They will know we are Christians by Our Love”, as the recessional song, a parishioner told me they had to be Christians to listen to me sing.

I also have the privilege of going out to our mission church in Redwood, which is a young church that is growing day by day. It is amazing to see the progress which they have made towards becoming a parish. The effort and work that has gone into getting it ready for a resident priest and an area for teaching religious education has been enormous. I have first hand knowledge of what it takes



Fr. Camillo shares a light moment with a parishioner after Mass.

to put all these things together. I literally put some of the furniture together. At one point, I wondered what does all this have to do with my priestly ordination. I realized that sometimes we have to build up the church.

The administrative part of my ministry has been the thing that I like the least. It can be very time consuming. There are so many meetings and directives, which have to be addressed. I used to wonder why priest didn't do more in their parish. I now know that many times they are having to attend a meeting or a seminar in another city and minister at all hours of the day. Pastoral Council, Finance Committee, Religious Education, the Cursillistas, the Guadalupanas, Deanery, and M.S.F. community meetings can take up

much of my time. These are some of the things that can make Father seem unavailable. I am here to serve and I try to serve as much as I can.

This year has been one of trials and errors. I have had some low times and some very high times, but all in all it has been a wonderful year. I have not accomplished many of the things, which I had set out to do. In God's time and not in mine has been one of the most important lessons I have learned. I will continue to open myself up to the will of the Father. I can see many avenues opening up before me and I plan to explore many of them. With God's help, I can serve his people and his Church. The honeymoon is not over. It will take time, patience, and humility, gifts that I pray God will give me.



Can you help MSF Educate a seminarian?

MSF has the tradition of accepting vocation candidates even if they cannot afford to pay for all of their seminary tuition, room and board. This has proven to be a wonderful approach and many men have been able to become great priests with the help of benefactors covering the cost of their seminary education.



Frater Mario Galindo, MSF
is in his second
year of theology.

The cost of a seminarian is \$70/day.



To Be a Missionary in America?

A simple reflection – by Rev. Ignatius Triatmoko, MSF



Fr. Ignatius Triatmoko, MSF arrived in the U.S. in January 2004 from his home in Java, Indonesia

It is a special occasion to come to the “Uncle Sam”, U.S.A. Many Indonesians have dreams to get such an occasion. Once my friend asked me, “Tri, is it true that you will be sent to the U.S. as a missionary?” My answer was only a smile, but a smile with a question mark inside my mind: What kind of missionary am I supposed to be?

I realize that some other MSF priests from my province (Java, Indonesia) are sent to Papua, New Guinea and Madagascar. We easily call them missionaries. Why? They

have to live and work in some rural area. What comes to my mind is a picture of a missionary working in a poor country among the natives there. How hard his efforts would be during the first months of adapting to new surroundings and a new culture.

Fortunately the North-American province speaks English. Why do I say “fortunately”?

I know that I am weak in speaking foreign-languages including English, although I have learned it since middle-school. Even ten years ago I stayed in the Philippines for an eight month long religious formation course. I remember that at the time I was speaking English very poorly, all the more so because 47% of participants were Indonesian. Nevertheless, at least I had a little bit of experience living in another partially English speaking country. That is why I say “fortunately”.

“Tongue and Ears”

Since the third week of January 2004 I have been in the U.S. It was a terrible winter when I arrived in St. Louis. I felt as though my tongue became frozen and stiffened. I was nervous because I had to be ready to speak in some strange language and to taste new foods with my “frozen tongue”. Thank God for the heater in the St. Wenceslaus rectory and the warm welcome of the community – all this helped me melt my “frozen tongue”. Slowly I adapted to speaking English and to the taste of food here.

Actually there is no problem with food. I think there are a limited number of tastes on this earth: sweet, salty, sour, and spicy

“What kind of missionary am I supposed to be?”

hot. My tongue has no problem with the tastes of food. But it still has a problem with the language, especially in speaking with good pronunciation. Besides the “tongue problem”, I have difficulty with my ears to understand others’ speaking. It is not easy to catch others’ pronunciation. I know that I need time for such adjustment in listening and pronunciation.

“Mind, Sense and Heart”

After several weeks in Saint Louis I moved to another saintly city, San Antonio. Here in San Antonio I live in the MSF Formation House. My dictionary is my best friend. It helps me to remember or recollect English words I’ve memorized. But I’ve found trouble with so many words with same or similar meaning and also a lot of words with several meanings. I need to know what appropriate words I have to use in speaking English



Fr. Ignatius enjoys a moment on the guitar and singing in English!

here. Moreover, I am assigned as the formation director. The formation director provides guidance to those men who are studying for the priesthood or brotherhood. A good formator should be a good listener. For that reason, understanding the American way of life becomes very important. It is not enough simply to read and to memorize words and then have no sense of them. I realize that every language is special, because it contains human experience of the people who use it. So, to sense another language means to enter, taste and get in touch with the life behind the words. In other words I need to live in that culture.

That is why I make efforts to get in touch with the American life-style. I occasionally celebrate Mass in New Braunfels, Texas and I attended a course at the MACC (Mexican American Cultural Center). I say Mass once a week at Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio. Even once a week I come to San Antonio College to be available to talk with the students there. But, I still become exhausted doing those activities because of the language. It is difficult for me to sense the

English-American language and the culture, but I persevere.

“HIS will, not mine”

To do something wholeheartedly needs strong motivation. Strong motivation comes from one's own will. Here is my struggle in my prayer-life. It is clear that I come and work here because I am sent by my superior. So, is it true that it does not come from my will? Frankly I've never asked my superior to send me here. So, whose will



Father Ignatius, MSF and Fr. Andrea, MSF (French Province) celebrating daily mass at the MSF Formation House in San Antonio.

is it? Of course, it is God's will.

In my prayer-life I keep refreshing and renewing my commitment as MSF with its three apostolates: mission to share good news with others, vocation to gain

servants for God, and pastoral-care for families to prepare good soil for God's Kingdom. By refreshing my commitment as MSF, I remember, realize, refresh and renew my motivation. In other words, in silence of prayer I put the will of God in my heart and let it internalize in me. I believe that sometimes God wants me alone -not lonely- to taste His will. God teaches me to change loneliness into oneness with Him.

As I said, the key is my heart. In the depth of my heart I meet

Him, my True-Friend who gives me perseverance, patience and peace in the midst of my struggle. He encourages me to continue doing efforts wholeheartedly for the sake of His will.

So this is who I am as a missionary; someone being moved by His will, being and working wholeheartedly with others to build His Kingdom. This missionary work happens in Madagascar, Indonesia, San Antonio, TX, and all over the world.



International Cooperative

The need for more priests in North America is well known. America is the new Mission Field. Fr. Joseph Roelke, MSF Provincial, has been developing relationships with other MSF provincials so that priests from other parts of the world can come to America to serve for three-year terms.

Two priests have already arrived. Fr. Ignatius Triatmoko, MSF arrived from Indonesia in January of 2004 and Fr. Clement arrived from Madagascar in January 2005. A third priest is due to arrive in February 2005 from Indonesia.



In order to maximize these priests ability to serve, MSF is providing an enculturation period which provides opportunities in and outside of classrooms to improve their English language skills, understanding of the American culture and Western customs. These steps will certainly improve the effectiveness of the priests in their ministry and that is why MSF makes the investment. **Can you help bring more priests to America? The cost is \$54/day/priest for the year of training.**



HOLY FAMILY LIFE

VOCATIONS IN THE FAMILY

By Robert F. Gotcher, Ph.D.

“A sower went out to sow...”

(Mt. 13:3) This is a familiar parable that is repeated frequently in the liturgy throughout the years. Jesus explains that the seed is the Word of God and emphasizes how important it is to prepare the soil adequately to receive that seed. Christians receive the Word of God, which is watered, animated and fed in their lives through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. As the plant grows up in a Christian's life, it takes on a particular shape, a specific vocation beyond the call to holiness common to all the baptized. For some people the Lord plants in their hearts a particular vocation to marriage and family. For others their vocation is to the priesthood or the consecrated life. As the parable points out, the type of soil that the seed is planted

in does not determine what kind of seed is planted, but whether the seed survives and flourishes. In Catholic families, parents are responsible for nurturing whatever particular vocation their children receive by providing the fertile soil of a holy family life.

The best soil for fostering vocations is a loving, generous, peaceful household characterized by an active pursuit of holiness--love of God and neighbor. Love of God shows itself through an intentional and consistent focus on Christ and His Church. Children will be more likely to consider regular prayer, frequent Mass attendance, and participation in the sacrament of Penance important if both parents do.

Parents can nurture their children's faith and vocation with:

- regular readings from the bible and the lives of the saints
- joyfully celebrating the liturgical feasts of the Church by including special foods, music and household decorations,
- a devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, examples and patrons of both a holy family life and consecrated virginity for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom,

“*The best soil for fostering vocations is a loving, generous, peaceful household*”



- active participation in the life of the parish and church organizations,
- frequent visits with priests, religious and other families who are happy with their vocations.

Parents display love of neighbor first in their manifest love for each other and their gentle and generous solicitude for their children. A vocation is personal. One of the best ways to encourage vocations is to carefully and prayerfully allow a child to develop in the unique direction that God calls him with his natural talents and spiritual tendencies

Love of neighbor also involves

- making the home a welcoming place of hospitality
- concrete, generous responses to the needs of family, friends, and neighbors
- active solidarity with and concrete preferential option for the poor
- civic, economic and political involvements to help create a culture of life and civilization of love in our city, our nation and our world

For many people, an active participation in the life of the parish, their profession, and their civic responsibilities is enough to pursue

a life of holiness. For others, it take the form of involvement in an ecclesial movement that focuses on lay spirituality and holiness, such as a third order, small church community, charismatic prayer group, or international organization such as Schoenstatt, Opus Dei, and Liberation.

Although the focus of a holy family life is positive--prayer and charity--there are forces in our culture that would undermine our efforts. The seeming omnipresence of sexual license and glorified violence means parents must practice vigilance over the way their children are gradually exposed and respond to negative cultural influences. Without fostering fear and a defensive attitude, parents should monitor television viewing, friends and involvements, teaching how a child can inform his everyday choices with the values of the Catholic faith.

A simple and genuine love of the Lord, the Blessed Mother, the Church and our neighbor lays the groundwork for a flowering of vocations. Active sacramental life, piety at home, associating with other active Catholics, minimizing negative cultural influences, charity and work for justice all prepare the soil to receive the seed of a vocation from God.

Stained glass window at Holy Family Parish in Corpus Christi, TX.

One caveat: Lest one think that there is some magic formula; a parent needs to keep in mind that a vocation comes to children from God, not mechanically from anything parents do. A vocation is a mystery. In fact, if your desire is to have a vocation to the priesthood or religious life, your very efforts may encourage a vocation to family life instead! The fruit of a vital Catholic family life usually is a desire on the part of the children to establish such a family of their own. Parents do provide a fertile soil for vocations by providing a loving, faith-centered atmosphere and by cultivating freedom and



openness to God's will in their children. It is God, however, who plants the seeds of a vocation to the priest-

hood, the religious life—or more often than not, to marriage and family. 

Robert Gotcher is a husband and father of six children. He lives in Franklin, Wisconsin, where he teaches theology at Sacred Heart School of Theology (www.shst.edu).



We Remember...

Father Donald Murray, MSF

October 3, 1924 to September 27, 2004

Fr. Donald was born in Grand Falls, Windsor to the late Ellen and Henry Murray. After his education at Grand Falls, he decided to join the Missionaries of the Holy Family in St. Louis, MO.

Following his novitiate in St. Louis he made his first profession on August 15, 1949, and was ordained to the priesthood for the Missionaries of the Holy Family on May 28, 1955. He served at Our Lady of Guadalupe—Seguin, Texas; St. James Parish—Gonzales, Texas; Our Lady of Guadalupe—Cuero, Texas; Sacred Heart Parish—Corpus Christi, Texas; Assumption Parish—Harlingen, Texas; Holy Family Parish—New Braunfels, Texas.

He retired from ministry in January 1991. Approximately two years ago he was diagnosed with cancer, which went into remission for a while, but returned early in 2004. Fr. Don decided to return to his hometown, Grand Falls, Windsor. He died in his brother's home on September 26, 2004. His funeral Mass was held in the same church where he was baptized – the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Missionaries of the Holy Family

The 2005 Apostolates and Ministries need your support

VOCATIONS:

Bro. Robert Delong, MSF has become the fulltime Vocation Director, but he had to leave a well-paid medical position to do so. Fostering vocations is at the heart of the MSF mission.

Bro. Robert is excited to be increasing his presence at local colleges and reaching out to parishes.

The Vocation program cost \$100/day.

SEMINARY:

MSF has the tradition of accepting vocation candidates even if they cannot afford to pay for their seminary tuition, room and board.

The cost of a seminarian is \$70/day

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE:

The need for priests in North America is well known. America is the new Mission Field. MSF priests from other parts of the world are coming to America for three year terms. Two priests have already arrived and a third is due to arrive in February.

The cost is \$54/day/priest in their first year which is training.

MISSION WORK:

MSF is pleased to support three missions in rural Texas. One mission is being considered as a potential parish. The limited funding available in a young mission parish is understandable, so much of the cost of the priest would be covered by MSF.

The cost to provide a priest at a mission is \$49/day.

SENIOR SUPPORT:

MSF has 13 retirement age members (70+).

The costs for retirement include their living expenses; health insurance and infirmed care.

The retirement expense is a frugal \$44/day/retired priest.

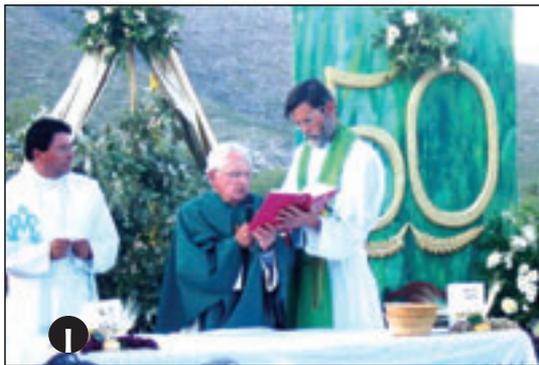
We need your help. Please see the enclosed envelope



AROUND THE PROVINCE

for Lent 2005

- A.** MSF Supporters gather for an evening to learn about MSF and it's past, but also to look forward into 2005 and learn about services and programs that need funding (see Pg.15). Meetings were held in Seguin, New Braunfels and Donna, TX. If you would like to learn more or attend a meeting in 2005 – please call the Provincial Office at (314) 577-6300.
- B.** The Missionaries of the Holy Family Apostolate Board held its 2nd Annual meeting in October. Eight lay members and the Four MSF Provincial Government members comprise the 12-person board that focused on promoting vocations and the development of the Friends of the Holy Family Association. Pictured from L to R are Fr. Joseph Roelke, MSF Provincial, Bro. Robert DeLong, MSF, Mrs. Gracie Mirabal Martinez and Mr. Martie Aboussie. A complete list of Board Members is on Pg. 3
- C.** Bro. Robert DeLong, MSF made his final vows on August 15, 2004. Vicar Provincial Fr. Andrea Spatafora, MSF presided.
- D.** Fr. Joseph Roelke, MSF Provincial welcomes Fr. Clement, MSF to the United States. Fr. Clement, who's home is in Madagascar, will be serving for three years in the North American Province as part of the International Cooperative.
- E.** Fr. Clement makes his first snowball!! His home country of Madagascar is located just south of the Equator and East of Africa. Seeing and touching snow is a new experience!!
- F.** Fr. Phil Sosa, MSF leading a discussion on vocations at one of his parish's PSR classes. High School students ask a range of questions from, "Why do you have to wear black with a white collar" to "Is it tough not to be married?"
- G.** Fr. Andre Teperek, MSF is visiting the North American Province for several months to learn American culture and the language. He is an accomplished musician and composer. He leads an annual weekend youth rally in France each year at the Shrine of our Lady of Lasallet. The weekend is packed with music and memories.
- H.** Frater Mario Galindo, MSF is pictured with Dr. Terrie Quebedeaux and Fr. David Tonary, MSF after making a renewal of his temporary vows. Frater Mario is currently studying at Sacred Heart School of Theology to be come a priest.
- I.** Fr. James Lienert, MSF was invited to return to Mexico to celebrate his 50th Anniversary as a priest. Fr. Lienert served 33 years in Mexico. An honorary plaque was made for his service.
- J.** Fr. Jack Kilberg, MSF celebrates his 25th Anniversary as a priest with parishioners.





VOCATIONAL THOUGHTS

I have been thinking about vocations a lot lately. This is probably due to the fact that I have recently embarked upon my own vocational journey in earnest. Many things come to mind when I reflect on vocations; the lack of vocations, decreased interest in the religious life, fears of Priesthood, and many more. I believe that the single most important factor is the way in which we are approaching the whole issue.

I do not mean to sound like Andy Rooney of "60 Minutes" fame, but here goes: Have you ever noticed when vocations are discussed in church, everybody is all for increasing vocational awareness, meeting with the Priest and/or the Vocation Committee, distributing literature, and participating in a "second collection" on vocation Sundays, but when it comes to talking with their child about a possible vocation they want no part of it? There is always an excuse: "She is needed at home", "He is too much into sports", "He is always in trouble", "He is not Priest material", or the ever popular "I don't want to lose him/her to the church and never see him/her again" and

"Who will take care of him?" Now I suppose that at the time that they are given, all of these excuses are perfectly valid to the person giving them, but too often these excuses are made without ever having asked the individual who may have the vocation.

The person who has a religious vocation may not be aware that they have a vocation; they need the extra help with discernment. Quite frequently, these persons may have questions that need to be answered, they may have feel-



by Brother Robert DeLong, MSF
Vocation Director – MSF North American Province

ings that they do not understand, and they simply need guidance. There is also the example used by Archbishop Flores of San Antonio in one of his homilies. "I didn't pursue a vocation because... nobody ever talked to me or asked me about a vocation or I'm not good enough" (to which the Archbishop replied, "Neither am I!")

Now that we have all this to think about, WHAT DO WE DO? First lets square away the myths and excuses; "needed at home" - just how long DO you plan to keep her home?; "too into sports" - Our Holy Father, John Paul, II has been an avid sportsman all his life (skiing, soccer, hiking, camping, etc.); "He is always in trouble" - St. Francis of Assisi was always in trouble, to say nothing of St. Augustine! As for not being "Priest material", who is until he is properly taught? 'Lose them to the church?' - Whose loss is this? As for "never seeing them again", well that one I will give you, it may well happen, but not as often as it may sound! Now then, we come to the excuse of "who will take care of him?" I think that this would be a good time for some reflection. Your child was probably at some point given over to God. He was baptized, confirmed, and was also most likely placed under the protection of our Blessed Mother. If you can trust your child with the Blessed Mother when he is ill, for example, why can you not entrust him to Her care

when it comes to a vocation. He will always have a mother to help them. She will look after him when you are not able to (but she won't iron his shirts!)

O.K. Excuses taken care of. Now what do we do? We can start by talking to the youth and others in our parishes. Remember the one who never followed through because nobody ever said anything to him? We need to be aware of the fact that in every person there

"The person who has a religious vocation may not be aware that they have a vocation"

is a vocation. Not all of these are vocations to the priesthood or to religious life, most are vocations to marriage, professions, and to life in the secular world, but there are those who may be thinking of a religious vocation and do not know where to go with it. Many young people are not comfortable or are afraid to go to the parish priest. A kind word on our part, a simple question at the right time and I have noticed sometimes just an off-handed remark about "Seminary" can be the icebreaker that is needed to start the process

moving! If, for instance, a young man thinks about becoming a priest but feels that he is unworthy and we offer no access to information or encouragement, do we not reinforce that unworthy feeling? How many good priests and religious brothers and sisters have we lost because we never said anything to them? We are fortunate to be able to live in a country where we are free to speak up about vocations to our youth and to other persons who may be interested.

Since I made my decision to enter religious life, I cannot remember how many people have come to me and said, "I used to think about becoming a priest (brother, sister), but I decided against it, or never pursued it". I like to feel that, in some small way, my decision to follow through with my vocation to the religious life as a brother may also allow somebody else the freedom to consider or to enter this incredibly fulfilling life! Please don't take me wrong, this is not as easy as it sounds. This is a decision which must be carefully thought out, prayed over, talked about, cried over, rejected, become angry with, and with the proper guidance and spiritual direction finally accepted. I, myself, fought with myself over a vocation for many years. I tried to run away from it, but it always caught up and found me. The hardest thing for a human being to do is to sit down, shut

up, and consider the will of God and to surrender to His direction. This continues even after you are a priest or a religious and will always be a struggle until we leave this world.

Our responsibility then is to our God, to act as His instrument to bring those who have a vocation to Him and to ease the doubts, answer the questions, and to be visible to those who are unsure. To be able to sit around with a group of young people or teens and actually talk with them about vocation is immensely satisfying. If you have touched one life, you have followed the instructions of Christ. It may be that the one life you have touched is the one who would never have followed up those strange feelings! As for those whose families do not want them to go into this life, well we need a lot of work to educate and enlighten these families. As I see it, our work is cut out for us and if we don't get to work time may run out for us and then we will have to explain to "THE BOSS" exactly why we didn't do the job. We may receive a lot of ridicule and harassment during our labor, but if we persevere the benefits are fantastic and what a RETIREMENT package we will enjoy with our Beloved Boss!

God Bless You And Keep You Always!



Missionaries of the Holy Family



Servants of God

From all walks of life we come to walk with God. Our paths in our walk will be as God directs us, but may be in many different directions.

Builders of Family

Charism

The congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family was founded in 1895 at Grave, Holland by Fr. John Berthier. Fr. Berthier dedicated the community to the Holy Family which is "the perfect model of every religious community and of every Christian family." Fr. Berthier taught us to seek out and encourage vocations, particularly among mature adults, the poor, and to form community by living as a family. Our community strives to live a missionary spirit by bringing the Gospel message to areas and places where others were not present or would not go.

Ministry

As Missionaries of the Holy Family, we involve ourselves in a large variety of apostolates, always in an attempt to serve the Church's current needs. Throughout the world we promote and serve the needs of Church, local community, family, and congregation.

Here in the North American Province (Canada, United States, Mexico) we are involved in many types of pastoral service. As priests and brothers we work in parishes, schools, hospitals, and homes for the aged. Our work reflects the concern and respect we have for family life.



In the U.S.A. & Canada
MSF Vocation Office
104 Cas Hills Dr.
San Antonio, TX 78213
(210) 344-9145





THE GET-TOGETHER GETAWAY

The leading tradition in successful families is the family vacation. Here, vacation is broadly defined as a regular break from routine—annual, monthly, even weekly—that not only frees everyone from daily demands, but more important, frees them to be with each other. Vacations are seen as a form of retreat, a chance to relax, regroup, and reinvigorate relationships. Given top priority status, vacations are not something to be put off, bypassed, or relegated to an if-we-have-the-time spot on the calendar. One father described his family's protectiveness toward their vacation time. "We made it

our business that whenever the kids were off school, we were off to somewhere. Sometimes it was unconventional, but it was always special." A flavor for the integral role of vacations in these families' togetherness comes from comments like these:



MSF is pleased to provide you this reprint from Dr. Ray Guarendi's book titled *You're a Better Parent than You Think*. Dr. Ray is a popular Catholic radio personality and guest speaker offering parenting advice in concert with Catholic values. More information about Dr. Ray's books and tapes can be found on the internet at www.DrRay.com

- “Vacations are the best of times for us because they are times together. We are able to relax; there is no TV, no basketball, no baseball. It is just us and the children. Around here it's hard to have much privacy. If we try to do anything, the phone rings or someone comes to the door. When we go away on a trip, there is nothing to bother us. We don't have the distractions, and we don't have to be anywhere.”

- “The best of times are during our summer vacations at a beautiful mountain cabin. No telephones or televisions or radios distract us from each other. We share so many moments together hiking, fishing, playing, reading. These times are good for our children, as they are not exposed to peer pressure and can explore who they are and who they want to become in natural solitude.”

- “The best of times with my parents must include our numerous family trips. The feelings of having a close-knit family became much stronger on these trips. I feel they were somewhat of a test of the strength and togetherness of our family. To spend days or weeks constantly together,

and to call these the best of times, shows that the tests were passed.”

[Daughter, aged seventeen]

- “The best times are when we are on a vacation and know we can't leave. We fight or just disagree, and then know we're trapped and so we do fun things.”

[Daughter, aged twelve]



A family day trip to the local river has lots of fun.

Parents who work hard every day at being parents realize: Families need to get away to get together. In one sentence, Julie from Omaha summarized her unwillingness to forsake vacations. “The kids aren't going to remember how clean the house was, but they will remember a trip to the state park.”

As with all traditions, it's the spirit, not the specifics, that matters. Neither money nor several days are necessary to create a vaca-

tion. Some families, when money and time were at a premium, improvised. Instead of traveling, an Alaska family schedules "play days" at home, suspending routine and requirements for everybody. They enjoy twenty-four uninterrupted hours playing as a family. Thinking about this takes me back to the "snow" days of childhood, when schools had to be closed and

***"Neither money nor
several days
are necessary to
create a vacation"***

several inches of snow temporarily baited much of my existence. Forced to be confined, I delighted in my unexpected freedom. The warmest memories can come from the coldest days.

Barb, a mother of five from New Jersey, has nothing but fondness for her family's budget vacations. "When the kids were little, we always did cheap things. We never took them anywhere like Disney World. Instead, we would go to the state park on weekends. Very rarely did we do anything that we had to spend money for. Consequently, we often ended up

just hanging around and enjoying our 'boring time.' To us, that was an important kind of time. We sat around the table and played a lot of made-up games."

Neither do kids need money to make a vacation. Thirteen-year-old Matt from Oregon said, "The best times I have ever had with my parents are when we just go on small outings, like golfing and fishing. I think this is because I like spending time with my parents rather than going to Disneyland or a place like that." His eleven-year-old sister, Kara, was even more easily contented. "The best times I have with my parents are when we sit down and have popcorn together while we play a game or watch television. It's fun, and we can talk about things." More fun than Disney World? At least it's cheaper.

More so than their parents, the kids say: A break from routine is important to us. It isn't where we go, how much money we get to spend, or the size of the swimming pool that we'll talk about for years. It's the chance to be with our family, not bothered by anything or anybody.

Vacations are booster shots for a family's resistance to everyday strains. 

Back to the Family Pages 129-131

Copyright © 1990 by
In The Company of Kids
Villard Books New York 1990



YOUTHFUL OUTLOOK

By Cynthia Lopez, Laura Lopez and Angel Magallanes

A DEEPER LOOK AT OUR FAITH

In today's youthful society, teenagers don't seem to have the faith that people once used to have. Instead of believing, we now question everything because we have no proof or we do not understand. So many of us youth, have lost all kinds of faith. Teenagers, along with everyone else, know that when they are in any kind of need or trouble, they can always pray to God. Their mistake is, that if they do not see results right away, or they do not see the result that they want, they give up and begin to question God. Many times this leads to problems early in their lives. Most of us know that God has his way of taking care of us and fixing our problems, and if when we pray for something and it does not happen, there is a reason for that. However, the problem is that not all of us understand God's reasoning, and so we begin to separate from religion, faith and oftentimes, God himself.

Many of today's teenagers know that when they are in need of help,

they can always turn to God in prayer. This is a good start; however, isn't it strange that it is only when we need or want something that we do this? We are all guilty of just asking and asking without ever giving or showing God how thankful we are by saying a little prayer. What is so hard about praying to thank God for what He has given us? Why can't we give a little time out of our busy schedule to sit down and really praise Him for everything He has already done for us? We are too busy asking for things, that we don't stop and look back and see what He has already

"Many youth won't even take the time to go to Mass on Sunday... Yet, they have plenty of time to go to parties or just hang out with their friends."



Laura, Angel and Cindy are all Altar Servers at St. Joseph Church in Donna, Texas

done for us. Many youth won't even take the time to go to Mass on Sunday, because they don't have time. Yet, they have plenty of time to go to parties or just hang out with their friends. Isn't God our friend? Shouldn't we make time to spend it with Him in prayer and even go to church?

On the other hand, there are those who might pray every day, but only out of habit. Do we pray from the heart to show how grateful we truly are, instead of making it something we feel we have to do? How strong is our faith to be doing such a thing to God? Is He just another item on a list of things

we have to do? We hope not. If that is the case, then we all need to sit down and really think about how deep our faith is. We need to keep in mind that God is far more important than our extra curricular activities and our other daily possessions. He is the one who helps us through everything we do, whether it is a football game, a band competition or schoolwork; He is always there for us. We need to talk to Him and tell Him what is going on in our lives and ask for help, but along with all this, we need to say a prayer to Him from our heart and not

just our mind.

What is it that needs to be done in order to keep faith alive in our youth? Is it within our households, our church, our schools or even our community itself that the problem arises? People need to start fixing it within themselves by reflecting upon the depth of their faith today, and stop worrying about what others may think. It never seemed to bother Jesus what other people thought when He would pray and heal others. He set the example, now we need to start following His example in living our daily lives.





A PROFILE OF SERVICE

Rev. Joseph Lawless, MSF Ordained June 19, 1971

Father Joe Lawless, MSF was born in East Orange, New Jersey to Joe and Alice, the oldest child of four on May 2, 1926. His two brothers are Jay who lives in Alaska, the late Neal, and sister Judy. Father Joe says that his early childhood was a very happy one even though he grew up during the depression years of the 1930's; years he remembers as dark and depressing because people at that time were without work and hungry.

His father, a master machinist, owned his own business, Lawless Coal Company in Brooklyn, New York. Because of this the family lived a comfortable life; his mother even had a maid. However, Father says that his first encounter with the depression, at age seven, was when his father lost his business and they had to move to Connecticut.

The family moved to his grandmother's sixty-two acre farm and stayed together continuing to live as they had before. Family years were happy ones for the Lawless family. While attending high school in Connecticut, Father Joe was very fond of sports and

participated in soccer, football, baseball, and track. He was selected Outstanding Athlete. He was also involved in the school newspaper as a reporter and participated in drama. Father Joe was not only the Outstanding Athlete his senior year but he was also selected the Most Popular of his class in 1944. Besides his extracurricular activities at school, Father Joe was also involved in boxing in his parish.

At church, he served as an altar boy with his brother, Neal, which



Fr. Joseph Lawless, MSF visiting the site of 9/11

had special meaning to him. The special meaning refers to participating with his brother. When their altar boy partnership broke up,

Father Joe continued to serve. He tells us that his participation during his high school years was very important. The Franciscan priests at his school used the Byzantine Eastern Rite in the celebration of the Mass. This rite captivated him through the use of incense, the vestments, chanting and the music rituals.

At age eighteen, Father Joe was inducted into the Army. He went overseas to Europe and served in the 42nd Rainbow Division.

General Douglas McArthur was the commander of the Rainbow Division during World War II. The rainbow became the symbol of the division because the members of the unit came from every state in the nation.

It was through his membership in the 42nd Rainbow Division that Father Joe saw a contrasting way of life to which he had never been exposed. This took place when his Division liberated Dachau Concentration Camp in Germany. According to him, this part of his life had much effect on him because of "what man can do against man."

What he saw were the bodies of men, women, and children who had been starved and tortured to near-death and were nothing but skin and bones. A particular

incident occurred when Father Joe says that he "picked up a skeleton" and carried him to the medics for medical attention. While en route to the medics the old man asked him in perfect English: "What faith do you hold to my son?" Father Joe replied that he was Catholic. The prisoner replied that he was a Jewish Rabbi. The Rabbi further told him "Don't ever forget this day." Upon arrival to the medics he was already dead in his arms. Father Joe comments that the out-



Fr. Joe Marching into Germany.

standing impact upon him was listening to the Rabbi say to him: "Don't ever forget this day!" it was his way of saying to him: "Always seek out and defend the truth – at all costs." This has been his number one priority as a priest living his vocation.

Because Father Joe's upbringing had formed in him a negative bias toward the role Jews had in the crucifixion, he was "hit" on

that day with a stunning revelation about the truth, which he has believed and lived by from that time on. You see, Father felt that he “met Jesus” on that day, being that Jesus was a Rabbi.

Another experience happened in Germany when Father Joe became part of a firing squad that killed some SS soldiers who were very young. He realized that he was capable of killing as a result of the hatred he had developed over the atrocities committed by the Germans at Dachau. “Events trigger off other events” is how Father Joe explains what happened in the shooting of the soldiers. This hatred developed over a period of time after he had seen the treatment of 500 priests who were imprisoned at Dachau. The treatment of these priests was totally degrading as they were teamed up to pull carts and pick up loaves of bread. If for any reason they dropped a piece of bread, the German guards made them lick it up. They were also tortured with electric prods.

In 1946 Father Joe was discharged from the army and for a time he pursued different directions in life. For a while, he and his sister ran their own business to repair and maintain shopping carts for a large grocery chain known as the Grand Union Grocers in the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. He also earned a degree in Journalism from the University of Georgia. He had

always been interested in writing as a result of his eighth grade field trip to Columbia University School of Journalism, where he learned about journalism. He received his degree, but never really put it into practice except as a reporter for the University of Georgia newspaper.

It was not until he read an article in a Knights of Columbus magazine, which was promoting Pope John XXIII Seminary in Weston, Massachusetts, that Father Joe considered a calling to the priesthood. What attracted his attention was the title, which read: “You can become a priest in four years.” Before this, it took up to eight years. This was a project sponsored by Archbishop Cushing from Boston. He inquired and found out that the only requirement was the applicant had to have a Bachelor’s degree, which Father already had in journalism. He applied and was accepted as a diocesan priest candidate. He attended Pope John XXIII Seminary for one year and in the first semester was told that he was doing well. However, during the second semester, he was informed, “you do not have a vocation.”

He had only a few weeks before the year was over and he thought of leaving the seminary without taking his final exams. A friend of Father Joe’s convinced him to go ahead and take his finals, which he did. He wanted to leave because he felt that he was a failure.

This turned out to be a good occurrence for the Missionaries of the Holy Family. Father Leo Garriazo, who was the vocation director at the time, contacted Fr. Joe and invited him to consider MSF. As a result of this invitation, Fr. Joe is now a Missionary of the Holy Family and very happy to be so. The rector of Pope John XXIII seminary had not given him a full explanation. It was not that he did not have a vocation for the priesthood, but that he was more

of interest as a seminarian with the Franciscans was that one of the members of the particular parish associated with the seminary was Phil Donahue, the famous T.V. personality, who started a Summer Youth Camp at the seminary to accommodate the poor of the youth community. A fellow seminarian and Father Joe were chosen to run the camp, which is still in existence.



Fr. Joe's First Mass after ordination, June 19, 1971 in Stanford, CN. Fr. Ed Mathews, MSF on the right concelebrating Mass.



Fr. Joe giving communion to his mom at his first mass. Father Jim Wuerth, MSF on the right.

oriented to the religious life rather than the diocesan life style.

After applying and being accepted to the Missionaries of the Holy Family, Fr. Joe became one of thirteen candidates in the community. He did his novitiate in Farmington, Missouri.

His studies were pursued at St. Leonard's Seminary in Dayton, Ohio with the Franciscans. A point

Father Joe was ordained a priest on June 19, 1971, at his home parish, in Stanford, Connecticut. After ordination, Father Joe started his ministry in California at the MSF parish of St. Camillus De Lellis serving the parishioners, a hospital and a Juvenile Hall for the youth. From here Fr. Joe was moved to another parish in the area, St. Albert the

Great in Compton, California, an Afro-American ministry.

While serving the MSF mission in the Los Angeles County Hospital, Fr. Joe relates the very interesting story of meeting actress, Susan Hayward. He says that as a boy growing up he had a terrific teenage 'crush' on her. On one occasion while administering

the Sacrament of the Sick, it happened to be none other than Susan Hayward. When he walked into her room, in conversation, he told her of his teenage crush on her. She said: "Father, you didn't have good taste!" Other parishes he has served over the years include Holy Family in New Braunfels, Texas; St. Joseph in Granite City, Illinois;

Our Lady of Guadalupe in Seguin, Texas; Sacred Heart in Corpus Christi, Texas; and Immaculate Heart of Mary in Harlingen, Texas. 

Fr. Joe Lawless was at St. Albert the Great Parish in Compton, CA.



Father Joe Lawless, MSF now serves the parishioners at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Corpus Christi, Texas where he has been for the last fourteen years. His ministries are diverse and include Jail ministry, Hospital, Mexican Missions, Police Chaplaincy, School Administration, AIDS ministry and Gangs. He has also served on several bishop's committees and Task Forces, as well as on the governing board of the Missionaries of the Holy Family.



He is like a tree
planted near running
water, that yields it's fruit
in due season and whose
leaves never fade

PSALM 1:3



Missionaries of the Holy Family

3014 Oregon Ave. St. Louis, MO 63118
Phone 314.577.6300 Fax 314.577.6301
www.MSF-America.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 519
CORPUS CHRISTI, TX