

The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

WINTER 2005-2006



FALL 2005

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Provincial Perspective

FALL 2005

Dear Readers:

As I write these few lines, the cleanup efforts from hurricane Katrina and Rita are well underway. Countless people are responding to those in need, while those in need are giving thanks to God for the generosity and goodness of people around the world.

What a perfect time for each of us to reflect and take stock of all of the blessings God has given us. The terrible events of these past weeks help us realize more than ever that suffering and sacrifice are a part of our everyday life, but hopefully our faith in God is stronger than any storm or tragedy that may come our way.

The Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are perfect opportunities to slow down and savor what is important. Forget about the big sales at the mall and turn the television off for a while. Spend some quiet time with your loved ones. Really think about how God has blessed you. As you pray, also think about and remember our great nation, those who lived and died to defend our freedom, and those who are still doing so today.

Every day offers us a wonderful opportunity to share our hearts, our food, our time and prayers with others. Giving thanks to God for what we have and sharing our blessings with others is the most important and holiest work we can do.

May the Lord 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

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Woman, 88 years of age, teaches Seminarian with her “LIFE” story

Contributed by Cecila M. Jelinek - Birth Mother

Frater Jose Mario Galindo, MSF is in his final year of study at the seminary. This summer his education had a hands on approach when he served in a senior center. While there, he met a woman with 88 years of wisdom who shared her “Life” story with Frater Mario.

When David was about 50 years old, he checked with the Catholic agency that handled his adoption to see if he could acquire some medical information concerning his birth mother. He was told she was still alive. He said he would like to meet her. In answer to their question, why? He said, “I want to thank her for the gift of life.”

The agency called me and said, “Are you sitting down? Your son wants to meet you.” Through the agency we shared our mailing addresses.

This call brought back to me a flood of memories and emotions from my youth. Back then I was alone



Cecila Jelinek

and barely able to take care of myself. In those years it was disgraceful to have an illegitimate child and being a Catholic made it especially hard. I desperately wanted to be out of the situation and I was given advice to go to Chicago where I could get an abortion. Abortions were illegal at that time.

The night before my appointment, alone in my hotel room, a friend called me. She made me realize that what I was about to do was wrong. She assured me that there would be help for me. The next morning I walked until I found a Catholic Church, and made my peace with God.

At home I went to a Catholic agency and was provided help through my pregnancy. Ultimately, they handled the adoption. I felt that offering my baby up for adoption was necessary because I wanted the child to have a full home life. I put him in God's hands, and with prayer, I knew he would be OK.

David came to visit me and brought his son Jimmy who was a teenager. We had a good visit. He met my family and was well received. He was close to his adopted mother; I wrote to her and thanked her for raising such a nice young man.

We were having a wonderful time.

David came to me and said, "Do you realize that if you had made the wrong decision over 50 years ago and had the abortion, that none of these people would exist." I said,



Cecila with David's Family

"Yes, I was just thinking the same thing." The thought of how close I was to making that decision is emotional for me. The room full of happy people stays in my mind.

At 88 years old and looking back, I thought having an abortion would solve a problem. Now I realize that would have exchanged one problem for a much larger one. I don't know how I would have handled knowing that I killed a child. What made me write this story? I received a picture of a beautiful eight month old little baby – Thomas David who is David's grandson and my great grandson. Thank you for reading my story and be not afraid to offer the brave advice like I received from my friend to a mother in crisis.



Thomas David

We have kept in touch, visiting back and forth. Last year I went to California for a visit. David's children and grandchildren were there.



**Frater Mario wishes to share this prayer
he found by Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary.**

The most important person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral – a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body.

The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints to heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God, the Creator, than any other creature; God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation... What on God's good earth is more glorious than this - to be a mother.

Pregnant and need Help?

❖ Birthright 1-800-550-4900

❖ Pregnancy Resource Centers 1-800-395-HELP (4357)

If you have had an abortion and need someone to talk to call **Rachel's Vineyard** at 1-877-HOPE-4-ME

Do you have a "LIFE" story?

Contact our Provincial Office (314) 577-6300



Rev. Wilfrid A. Potvin, M.S.F. died the morning of August 24, 2005 at his residence at St. Martin de Porres Church, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. He was 64 years of age.

Fr. Potvin was born in Ottawa on December 6, 1940 to May (Lalonde) and Leo Potvin. He had 5 brothers and 3 sisters.

Wilfrid entered the Missionaries of the Holy Family in August of 1986 and made his first profession of vows on August 15, 1989. He was ordained a priest on June 13, 1993. Fr. Wilfred served at St. Monica Parish, Ottawa; St. Martin

de Porres Parish in Nepean; Notre-Dame de Lourdes Parish of Cyrville; and Chaplain of Queensway Carleton Hospital.

Funeral services were held at St. Martin de Porres Parish, with vigil prayers and visitation on Sunday August 28, 2005. A Mass of Christian Funeral was celebrated on Monday August 29, 2005 with burial at Capital Memorial Gardens.

Eternal rest grant to him, O Lord, and may his soul rest in peace. Amen



Fond Memories

Contributed by Rev. John Carl Lombardi, M.S.F.

I have many fond memories as a Missionary of the Holy Family, especially during my year as a transitional deacon while assigned to Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Seguin, Texas. To this very day wonderful memories fill my heart with great joy.

It was the highlight of my week when on Sunday evenings I would travel with Father Jim Wuerth, MSF or the late Father Gerry Mackin, MSF to the Redwood Mission so I could assist them at Mass. What made it so special was that Mass was celebrated in a restaurant due to the fact that at the time they were in the process of building a mission church.

The owners of the Mesquite restaurant, Mr. & Mrs. Everisto Gonzales and their lovely daughter, would on Sunday evenings convert their restaurant into a chapel. It really worked well for they had many religious artifacts on the walls that made for an easy transition from restaurant to chapel.

From the moment we got out of the car there was always someone there to greet us. Once inside we were welcomed by the faithful as if we were some long lost relatives.

One memorable Sunday we forgot to pack the altar wine. Well, Mr. Gonzales spontaneously suggested that we use the Tequila he had on hand, but of course that just wouldn't work. So Father Jim headed out to get the wine. They were gone quite awhile and during this time Gloria DeLeon and I started to sing religious songs in Spanish and in English which kept us all happy and occupied. Fr.

Jim came back with the wine just in the nick of time before our voices gave out.

Today, there is the beautiful mission church of St. Joseph in Redwood. I will never forget all the wonderful

people who came faithfully every week to that restaurant to participate in the holy sacrifice of the Mass - especially the children with their wonderful little smiles. 



Gonzales Family with Fr. Camillo



HOLY FAMILY LIFE

A Little Secret to Transform your Marriage

Contributed by Steve Wood & Jim Burnham

Have you ever listened to children playing in a sandbox? If you go by a sandbox filled with five-year old girls, what will you hear? Probably the sounds of chattering as the little girls engage each other in animated conversation. If you go by a sandbox filled with five-year old boys, what will you hear? Probably the sounds of grunting and groaning as the little boys push their trucks through the sand.

The verbal skills of five year-old girls usually surpass those of five year-old boys. Unfortunately for men, this lack of verbal expertise seems to follow us through life. We constantly lag behind women in our ability to communicate. This communication difference between men and women becomes even more pronounced in marriage.

You've probably heard that men are from Mars and women are from Venus. However, the problem is

much worse than that. Women are from Venus, but men are from deep outer space. How can men come back into orbit with their wives? The



secret to the mutual planetary attraction of spouses is for men to learn how to communicate with their wives so that they don't live, emotionally speaking, in another galaxy. This one little secret can transform a marriage almost overnight.

A healthy marriage is like a strong threefold cord¹. It has three indispensable ties: a **physical** bond, a **spiritual** bond, and an **emotional** bond. Men generally focus on the physical bond, while women typically concentrate on the emotional. The emotional bond is nourished and strengthened by communication. For wives, verbal communication is one of the most significant ways husbands can show their love. At the same time, many husbands are nearly oblivious to the verbal needs of their wives. A wife will never feel truly fulfilled in marriage

if her husband does not strengthen the emotional bond by communicating frequently. In stark contrast, a husband from outer space says to his wife, "I told you twenty years ago that I loved you and if I ever change my mind I'll let you know."

The natural difference in communication styles between men and women is difficult for most husbands to overcome. Yet something else has happened over the past thirty years that has aggravated this natural difference, causing men to be lost

in space when it comes to communicating with their wives. I am referring to the common occurrence over the past thirty years for couples to have premarital sexual relations.

Premarital sex weakens two of the three marital bonds. How?

When a couple has pre-marital sexual relations they know that they are breaking God's commandments. As a result, their spiritual bond is broken at the very time their spiritual relationship should be maturing.

Deep interpersonal communication takes place in all sexual relations. It is very easy for a man to feel like he is building the emotional bond with his wife-to-be during pre-marital sexual relations. A man thinks

that he is fully sharing his feelings in the sexual embrace: "Boy, are we ever communicating!" The problem for the man is that his verbal communication skills become fast-frozen at the point pre-marital sex begins. Physical bonding replaces emotional bonding. During the critically important months before marriage, a man should be learning how to express himself in non-physical ways to his fiancée. Instead, the intensity of the physical communication eclipses the verbal. The husband enters marriage with frozen

emotional skills. As a result, many marriages shatter.

In 1988 the average length of marriages in the U.S. that ended in divorce was

seven years. Twenty percent of these divorcing couples ended their marriage before their third anniversary.² In the typical county courthouse in the U.S., the majority of the filings for the dissolution of marriage are made by women. This is surprising since women are usually trying the hardest to hold a marriage together. What makes so many wives, after a few years of marriage, willing to throw in the towel?

A 1989 study done by the *National Survey of Families and Households* found that "unions begun by cohabi-



tation are almost twice as likely to dissolve within ten years.”³ Another study reported in 1991 in the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* found that “nonvirgins have a divorce rate that is 53% to 71% higher than virgins.”⁴ A third study by the National Council on Family Relations found that newlyweds who had pre-marital relations were less happy and that the wives complained about poor communication after the wedding.

All three of these studies confirm that pre-marital sex puts a huge (and unnecessary) stress upon a marriage. It shatters two of the three bonds of marriage. Not only does it sever the spiritual bond, but pre-marital sex also freezes a man’s already puny communication skills. After enough years of emotional neglect, the wife finally feels frozen out. She marches down to the courthouse and files for divorce.

How do couples who have started their marriages on the wrong foot renew their spiritual and emotional bonds? First, honestly acknowledge that God knew what he was doing in commanding us to save the sexual embrace for marriage. God graciously gave us the prescription for a lasting marriage three thousand years before our contemporary sociologists. Second, if the pre-marital relations have not been confessed, go



to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Third, for spouses who have never developed their spiritual bond, begin by taking a little time to pray together. Fourth, for husbands who have allowed their verbal skills to lie dormant, attend spring training in marital communication! Put in a little extra effort to strengthen the emotional bond with your wife.

How well does this little effort at communication work?

Our office received a long-distance call from Virginia on a Monday following one of our weekend St. Joseph’s Covenant Keepers conferences. It seems that one of the Navy men attending the conference turned to his wife as he was leaving for duty on Monday morning and said something like, “I just want you to know that I am grateful you are my wife and that I love you.” These simple words put a spark in the heart of this sailor’s wife. She enthusiastically called her friends to share the excitement of her husband’s declaration. Her friends called others including us at the Family Life Center. We were amazed to hear the joy created by twenty seconds of emotional communication.

After a men’s conference in Cincinnati, another man decided to listen more carefully to his wife and to share with her not only his thoughts but also his feelings. When he shared

this decision with his wife, she took him to see their marriage counselor. Previously, this couple had been near the brink of divorce and gone to marital therapy for years. After hearing the husband's intentions to communicate with his wife on a more sensitive level, the therapist gave his opinion that they would no longer need his services. This miracle in Cincinnati demonstrates the incredible power of verbal communication to strengthen a marriage.

***“The secret to loving
your spouse is
giving yourself.”***

The secret to loving your spouse is giving yourself. Communication is a gift of yourself to your wife. Even more than gifts of jewelry or flowers, your wife loves to hear of your affection for her.

It only takes a few seconds, but this simple secret of communicating can literally transform your marriage. Take a few moments and tell your wife how much she means to you. Tell her why you married her and why you'd marry her again. Praise her for all she does to make your house a home. Thank her for being the mother of your children. Affirm how much richer she has made your life. Share your hopes and dreams. Pray with her, and pray for her. Ask her what she is thinking. And then really listen!

When it comes to loving our wives, we don't have to be in outer space. If we carefully build the spiritual, emotional, and physical bonds with our covenant partner, we will preserve a strong planetary attraction and a healthy marriage. 

Endnotes

1 Ecclesiastes 4:12

2 Michael J. McManus, *Marriage Savers: Helping Your Friends and Family Avoid Divorce*, Zondervan (Grand Rapids, MI, 1993, p.105.

3 *Marriage Savers*, p.91.

4 *Marriage Savers*, p.92

This reprint is provided with permission from the Family Life Center International. More information on the topic of this article and about Steve Wood and Jim Burnham can be found at www.Dads.org or by calling 941-764-7725.

Steve Wood is the founder of St. Joseph Covenant Keepers (SJCK) which is an informal international network of Christian men, under the patronage of St. Joseph, dedicated to strengthening the family. Steve is also the founder of the Family Life Center International.

Jim Burnham is an internationally known cradle-Catholic author and speaker. Jim and his wife, Lisa, have been married 11 years and have five children. Jim and his father founded San Juan Catholic Seminars, a lay organization devoted to explaining and defending the Catholic faith.



VOCATIONAL THOUGHTS

A Love Like No Other!

Contributed by Brother Robert Delong, M.S.F.

Have you ever had feelings for someone that are so strong that your time and thoughts become focused on that person? You may have grown up knowing this other person, but suddenly unexpected feelings emerge.

People may start to notice that you are not the same. You may be quieter or maybe more energetic. They know something has changed. Finally somebody might say "He (she) must be in love!" and they will have a good laugh about it, but you know that they are right!

If they see the change in you, does the person you are focused on know or see the change in you?

Finally you make a decision to go and "spill the beans". Gathering up all the courage you can find you make a point of meeting the person. Not knowing how to say it you just blurt out "I LOVE YOU! Then you are terrified that you won't be taken seriously or worse, you'll be rejected, but instead you are blown away when you hear "I love you too, and I always have." This starts a whole new life for you.

This can be the essence of a religious vocation, a love so deep and so total that we are willing to give up every-

thing that we have to follow the will of God and to commit ourselves to Him and to His service. We have grown up with Him in our lives and many times haven't even noticed that He is there. Suddenly we realize that we are His and He is ours! We finally get around to telling Him that and He says " I love you too, and always have!"

It is in this great love that we are made complete. We must be willing to give ourselves totally to Him and trust in His will for us. To be able to embrace the religious life in service to God and to His people



Brother Robert Delong, M.S.F.
Vocation Director – M.S.F.
North American Province

wherever they may be takes a loving relationship. We are given the command by Jesus to "Love one another as I have loved you..." (John 15:12) and we are instructed by St. Paul as to how that love is to be manifested, in perhaps the most famous love chapter, I Corinthians 13. Also, Blessed Mother Theresa of Calcutta has urged us "to see the face of Jesus in every person we meet." Being human, sometimes we find this difficult.



Fr. Camillo Botello, MSF Ordained October 17, 2003

Today in our world it could be very easy to forget our "One True Love" and so we have to constantly be in touch with Him through our daily prayer life, and our thoughts must be constantly on Him in all we do. As religious brothers, sisters, and priests we are committed to do just that, we strive to make our very lives a living prayer and testimony to the never ending, unconditional love of God. We do this through every aspect of our lives, even when we work outside of our communities, and invite all to join with us in sharing this great love.

Do you feel you may have a call to a life as a priest, brother, or sister? Do not ignore the call, seek out a vocation director or the priest in your parish and talk about it. Parents

should be careful not to brush aside the interest of a child to learn about a religious vocation. Encourage them.

May God bless you and keep you in His Love! 

Bro. Robert

For further information about a vocation as a priest or brother, or for any questions you may have about vocations, please contact us at:

Vocation Office
Missionaries of The Holy Family
104 Cas Hills Dr.
San Antonio, Texas 78213
(210) 344-9145
fax: (210) 344-9146
web: www.MSF-America.org



Province Apostolates Succeeding With Your Support!

Vocation activity is increasing! Having a full time Vocation Director with a team of 3 supporting priests has been an expense, but it is bearing fruit. Additionally, the volunteer efforts of the laity have been critical. Vocation inquiries have grown from two (2) per month to a rate of ten (10) per month. Ads in vocation magazines, a presence on college campuses, a web site and vocation weekends at parishes have all contributed to the increase.

Seminary Education continues for Frater Jose Mario Galindo, MSF. His graduation is nearing and plans are for ordination in 2006. The increase of vocation inquiries will likely result in more seminary candidates, but the Seminary Education fund is low. Building up this fund will be critical so new candidates who cannot afford to pay for their education will have a means to pursue their vocation.

International Cooperative activity is adding priests serving in America! The province has four (4) priests; their homelands are Indonesia, Madagascar and Poland. Two (2) priests completed their training and are serving in a parish or the province. This October Fr. Joe Roelke, MSF Provincial, traveled to Argentina to meet Holy Family Provincials from other parts of the world to find additional support and candidates for the program. More candidates are expected and funding for their training is needed.

Mission Work continues at 6 mission sites. Missionaries of the Holy Family priests staff three missions in remote and rural areas of Texas; Hunter, Redwood, and Donna. Holy Family priests also serve at two chaplaincies for the Little Sisters of the Poor Home for the Aged. Finally, a priest is also serving at a rural parish in Minnesota. These mission communities are smaller than a typical parish and so the Missionaries of the Holy Family serve with a missionary spirit, and benefactors' support makes the difference for uncovered expenses.

Retirement Years have arrived for twelve (12) senior priests over the age of 70. Many continue to serve the faithful on a regular basis. The missionary work of years past did not always include a salary nor building a retirement or pension plan. Generosity from benefactors has helped cover many expenses for senior members.

Keep the success moving forward. Please support the Missionaries of the Holy Family Apostolates. Please contribute today! 

AROUND THE PROVINCE



(l to r) **Fr. Edmundo Michalski, MSF, Fr. Jim Wuerth, MSF, Fr. Joseph Roelke, MSF** enjoy a moment in St. Peter's Square in Rome. They were attending a required meeting with other Missionaries of the Holy Family Provincials. Fr. Edmundo is the Treasurer for the Missionaries of the Holy Family headquarters in Rome.



(r to l) **Fr. Richard Oberstar, MSF** enjoys reminiscing with **Irene Sullivan** and **Adam and Lorraine Virnig** while at Holy Family Parish in Hillman, MN.

The Missionaries of the Holy Family International Cooperative continues to grow. In October **Fr. Tomasz Grabara, MSF** arrived from Poland and was welcomed to the Formation House. Shown are (above l to r) **Fr. Tomasz, MSF** (Poland), **Fr. Ignatius Triatmoko, MSF** (Indonesia), **Fr. Clement Razafimahatratra, MSF** (Madagascar). Not pictured is **Fr. Ignatius "Feddy" Himawan, MSF** who is now assigned to serve at Holy Family and Our Lady of Perpetual Help parishes in New Braunfels, TX.



Fr. Ignatius "Feddy" Himawan, MSF (right) enjoys a Texas sized steak! Fr. Feddy arrived this year as part of the Missionaries of the Holy Family International Cooperative. Fr. Feddy's home is Indonesia and he served for several years in Papua, New Guinea. He is planning to serve in the United States for at least 3 years.



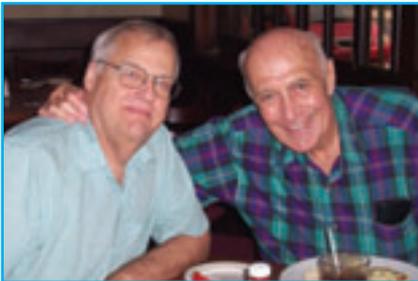
Brother Robert DeLong, MSF (above) speaks with a youth after Mass during a Vocations Weekend.

AROUND THE PROVINCE



+Rev. Joseph Grundhoff became the first Missionaries of the Holy Family pastor in America on November 1, 1924. He is shown standing next to the first chapel/cottage on Long Lake in Crow Wing County, Minnesota. **Brother Roland Kapsner, MSF** is shown standing near the same cottage as it looks today in 2005.

Father Jim Wasser, MSF (left) a volunteer at the Westside Community Center, and Alan Seelhammer (right) chairman of The Institute for Public Health Education Research, speak with Travis Roberts from Louisiana about programs available in New Braunfels that help Katrina victims. *[used with permission; photo by Mandy Reary text courtesy of Herald-Zeitung]*



Fr. Joseph Roelke, MSF (left) enjoys a meal and catching up with **Fr. Leo Gariazzo, MSF** while on a visit to New York. Fr. Leo was Fr. Joe's teacher in the seminary. Fr. Leo is pleased to see his student as Provincial. Fr. Leo is retired but supports parishes in the area with weekly celebration of Masses.



Pauline (Peggy) Clark, 88, receives her First Communion at Mass in July at St. Wenceslaus Parish in St. Louis. **Father Jim Wuerth, MSF** presented her with the Eucharist. *(photo by Jerome Bielicke)*

AROUND THE PROVINCE



The Missionaries of the Holy Family Advisors are developing ways to attract philanthropic support for the work of the Holy Family Priests and Brothers. Pictured (l to r) **Harry Fabick, Fr. Joe Roelke, MSF and Tom Kutis III.** Not pictured is **Martie Aboussie.**

Frater Jose Mario Galindo renewed his vows in August. (l to r) **Dr. Terri Quebedeaux, Juan Eseban Montoya, SCJ, Deacon George Miller, Frater Mario Galindo, MSF, Guadalupe Sermersheim** (Mario's sister) and **Rev. Jim Wuerth, MSF.**



Father Joseph Roelke, MSF volunteers as President of the Benton Park West Housing Corporation and is shown in front a newly renovated building by **Dan Morgan** for his tailoring business. (l to r) **Marlene and Dan Morgan, Fr. Joe, Alderman Ken Ortman.**



Before renovation



PARENTS TIME OUT

Time – The Essence of Parenthood

Contributed by Dr. Ray Guarendi

TIME. The four-letter word identified second only to **LOVE** as a cornerstone of family cohesiveness. Excellent parents leave little doubt just how critical to a family's well-being they consider the willingness to spend time with and for the family. John, a father of four boys and a girl, minced no words in saying, "There are no tricks to parenting, just hard work. It starts with sacrifice and then goes to ultimate sacrifice. It is total commitment." Bobby, a mother in Idaho seconded that perception more succinctly, "The family has always come first with me. That is where everything begins and ends."

The saying "Time is of the essence" can be rephrased slightly to describe strong family life. Time is the essence.

Time provides the context in which all other family successes occur. The quality of relationships, the effectiveness of discipline, the openness of communication, the depth of spirituality - all are inextricably tied to the investment of positive time with one's family. Love is the foundation of a family. Time is the medium for love.

***"Time is the medium
for love"***

Jerry from New Hampshire will be ever-grateful that as a young father his "my-life-first" attitude was permanently altered by the hard-hitting words of people assessing life after seven or eight decades of experi-



Dr. Ray Guarendi

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

ence. "What changed my whole philosophy about having a family and believing in family was listening to old people - people who have retired, people who have gone through their lives raising their families, either successfully or not so successfully. When I was so active and wanted to be in everything - City Council, a singing group, Boy Scouts - I thought I had the perfect existence. But these older people kept saying, 'Just enjoy

***"Just enjoy your children.
Love them and be
around them now."***

your children. Love them and be around them now.' Those words hit me like a rock. These people were close to death. They knew what is important. They didn't say, 'Be active in the community'; 'Be a success at work.' They said, 'Be with your family.' That, for me, is the salt of it."

Betty, mother of Judy, just recently graduated from college with honors, and Rick, who "isn't graduated yet, but is trying hard," always believed her time was the most durable gift she could give her children. Having this affirmed by her son was something she'll cherish forever. "Once, after our son had grown beyond the baseball and soccer fields, he and I were in a discussion, and I remarked that a neighbor boy, who had given his parents no end of problems, was now on his third car, having wrecked two others. I regretted not

being able to afford one car for our son, who had never given us a problem in all of his twenty-one years. His 'response was, 'You and dad gave me something more important, something Steve never had-parents who were always there.' These words were, and are, my greatest gift."

Bill, father to Travis and Troy, aged twelve and fifteen, learned the preciousness of time long before becoming a parent. It was a lesson thrust upon him during childhood, and it's a lesson that's guided his fatherhood since it began. "The death of my dad when I was twelve was absolutely the worst thing that's ever happened to me. To this day, it's difficult for me to even think about it. Because of that loss, I try never to put off spending time with my kids. I realize it will not last forever."

Few of these parents entered parenthood with an ingrained realization of the degree of commitment involved. The value of time to a rewarding family life is something they've come to appreciate more with the years. Many admitted that as their family evolved, their priorities evolved with it, sometimes out of necessity. Not uncommonly, outside interests, hobbies, even job promotions on occasion, were cut back or bypassed altogether. The choices were difficult at times. On looking back, putting family first was a decision that none of the parents regretted in the end.

- *"One of the things I used to do was to go into my own [photography]*

darkroom, put on my stereo headphones, and work. I could shut the whole world out. But when my daughter [aged two] wanted to come in, I couldn't shut the door. I wasn't home all day long, and when I came home; she would want my attention. I just couldn't go into that room and close that door anymore. So I sold all my darkroom equipment and haven't done it since."

- "It took me a while to realize that when children walk into a room and give you a greeting, they're asking you to turn around, recognize their presence, talk with them a few minutes, and see what they are doing. There have been times when I would say, 'I'm too busy. Don't follow me around. I'm really tied up.' [If I could go back] those are the things I would change. The kids have to be first on my list."
- "My teaching career took a backseat when my kids came along. I felt that time spent with my children was more valuable than any career for me. In order to give my best, I wanted my time devoted to my children. I haven't regretted it for a minute."

Patricia, a teacher's aide and mother of two boys, put it most bluntly. "You have to give up some of your own life when you have children. You have to know that, in many ways, you are living for them now."

Time is precious because it is limited. There is only so much of it to

spread around, especially for parents. Big chunks of your day are gobbled up by the basic demands of running a household. The larger your family, the less discretionary time you have. Not one of these time-generous parents advises anyone to blindly follow the dictum of "At all costs, allot every minute of your free time to your children." Such a one-dimensional existence will fry your parental circuits before your firstborn cuts his first tooth. Even if you could relish being with or near a child every spare second, she wouldn't be real grateful for a hovering, ever-watchful parent. In the long-term, she'd be slow to grow up, and in the short-term, how could she ever get away with anything?

Involved parents recognize the importance of keeping some space in their togetherness, for their mental well-being and their children's. Nancy, a mother of three, aged twelve to seventeen, said, "I try to be where my children need me. Sometimes that's been at home, sometimes that's been as a Sunday school teacher or scout leader, and sometimes they have needed me to be physically apart from them so they could become more independent." And also so mom could regroup. 

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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





YOUTHFUL OUTLOOK

Turn Me Over!!!

Contributed by **Kristy Gomez**

This year has been one heck of a year. A lot of things have happened with my family, the world and just me. I don't seem to understand it all. I see things that happen to my family, the world and to me. I keep on asking myself, "Why? Why me? I spend all my time at church, I'm in love with God, and I teach Jesus' word. WHY ME?" So what is it? What keeps me going? Why can't I just stop? It hurts too much! But then God showed me why.

Jesus never said this world would be easy but He did say that He would be with us wherever we go. When things happen that I don't understand, I think, "What did I do to deserve this" or "What did anyone do to deserve this?" Then, after thinking back, I see it was a

blessing because the only way I got through it was through God and Him alone. 1 Peter 2:20, *"But what credit is there when beaten for doing wrong? But if patient when you suffer for doing what is good, this is a grace before God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps."*

I am currently reading the book, My Heart's Cry by Anne Graham Lotz. In the first chapter there is a story being told about the blind beggars in the city, "Jesus had been walking through the congested streets of Jerusalem when his attention was caught by a beggar who had been born blind. Stopping, Jesus patiently explained to His disciples and



Kristy Gomez - Is a cradle Catholic. She has been participating in the youth choir since the 7th grade. Recently she graduated from New Braunfels High School and she is attending San Antonio College. She has plans to attend youth ministry certification classes and to assist in teaching 2nd year confirmation this year as well as teaching 5th grade CCD classes. Her hobbies include playing guitar, writing music, and singing for her parish.

to the man that the blindness was the result of no one's fault. Instead, it was an opportunity to reveal the glory of God."

Jesus draws near to those who are suffering, especially when the suffering is for His sake. Romans 8:18, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed to us."

That is so awesome! This is why we

"This is why we should now look at things that we once called stressing, as blessing!"

should now look at things that we once called **stressing**, as **bleasing!** So, no matter what the devil tries to throw at us, whether it is family problems, temptation, self worth or just any situation we are in, we will stay standing. In the words of St. Lawrence, "**Turn me over, I'm done on this side.**" If God brought us to it; He will get us through it.

Let us never give up on God. No matter what obstacle we are faced with, and when we don't know what to do, we have to keep singing. We have to keep praising His name. James 1:2, "Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance." 

More About St. Lawrence

*The Prefect of Rome, a greedy pagan, condemned Lawrence to a slow, cruel death in 258 A.D. The Saint was tied on top of an iron grill over a slow fire that roasted his flesh little by little, but Lawrence was burning with so much love of God that he almost did not feel the flames. In fact, God gave him so much strength and joy that he even joked. "**Turn me over,**" he said to the judge, "**I'm done on this side!**" And just before he died, he said, "It's cooked enough now." Then he prayed that the city of Rome might be converted to Jesus and that the Catholic Faith might spread all over the world. After that, he went to receive the martyr's reward. Saint Lawrence's feast day is August 10th.*

This excerpt on the life of St. Lawrence is used with permission from Catholic Online which can be found at www.catholic.org



A PROFILE OF SERVICE

Rev. Eugene Ronan, M.S.F. An Autobiography

I was born January 13, 1941, in Altoona, Pennsylvania, the fourth child of Dr. Joseph A. and Margaret Mary Ronan. I attended Our Lady of Lourdes elementary school. I started my high school at Highland Hall prep school. Highland Hall closed after my second year, and I was forced to complete my high school in the public school system. I graduated from Altoona Senior High School in June 1959. I continued my studies and ended up as a Funeral Director and embalmer in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. I was involved in the funeral business for 25 plus years.

In 1984 my brother Bill died very suddenly. After Bill's death, I began attending daily Mass and offering my Mass intention for the repose of my brother's soul.



God works in mysterious ways. When I was young I always felt drawn to the religious life as a priest, but always had an excuse to avoid exploring it any further. Certain nuns in my elementary school kept secretly putting vocation prayers on my desk. As I continued attending Mass for my brother the idea of a vocation kept coming back stronger and stronger, until 1987, with

the help and advice of Fr. Paul Winnents, C.I.C.M., I contacted the Missionaries of the Holy Family in St. Louis, MO. I visited the Missionaries of the Holy Family on Ashby Rd in St. Louis in February 1987. I knew immediately this community was for me. I returned to St. Louis in August 1987 and never looked back

I began my novitiate in August

1987, with one other candidate, Wilfred Potvin, (page 4) who died just this month. Our novitiate year was spent in Canada and that one year was the longest ten years of my life. After novitiate I continued my studies at the Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis. After my first year, the community moved me to San Antonio, Texas. I continued my studies at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio and in 1993, after completing all my studies, I was ordained a priest at St. Rose of Lima, my home parish in Pennsylvania on September 18, 1993.

I have been assigned to a number of parishes in Texas; Our Lady of Victory in Beeville; Holy Family in Edinburgh; Pastor of St. James in Beeville; and my current assignment as Pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in New Braunfels. For a shorter period of time I was also assigned to St. Wenceslaus Parish and as chaplain of the Little Sisters of the Poor in St. Louis.

It has not always been easy. I was diagnosed with Tuberculosis in

1997 when I was Pastor of St. James in Beeville. That same year I was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma (cancer of the bone marrow).



After some very intensive treatment and the good care of a wonderful Doctor (Rachael Borson), my health is pretty good. Although life is busy as Pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and our Mission, St. John's in Hunter, Texas, I am very

happy and know I made the right decision in 1987. 

Corrections:

The Profile of Service article in the Lent/Easter 2005 issue did not indicate its author. We are grateful to Frater Mario Galindo, MSF who interviewed Fr. Joe Lawless and wrote the article.

We apologize for an error in The Profile of Service article about Fr. Lawless which indicated that he served at Holy Family Parish, New Braunfels, TX when he actually served at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in New Braunfels, TX.



Four Marks of the Church

Contributed by Frater Jose Mario Galindo, MSF

A trip to Rome was an unexpected part of my seminary education. While it is not always possible, I was blessed with permission to go. The plans were set months in advance for us to be there at the end of April. It was God's providence that our journey to Rome coincided with the installation of Pope Benedict XVI. What an amazing gift!! As I think about this trip, the question in my mind is, "Who is in charge in our lives?" In Spanish we have a saying, "Dios se rie de los planes de los hombres." This means "God grins at the plans of people." This trip turned out to be a very good example of this phrase.



Installation of Pope Benedict XVI on April 24.

Before knowing this trip would include the installation of our new Pope, a personal goal was to visit the four major basilicas in Rome and to see how the four marks of the Church – **One, Holy, Catholic** and **Apostolic** – might be seen in these basilicas.

The four marks were given to us by

the First Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D. during the formalization of the Nicene Creed. The marks were reaffirmed by the Council of Trent in 1545-63. The four marks state that the Church is **One** because its members are united in faith and doctrine under the pope; **Holy** because it offers the means of receiving sanctifying grace and because it was founded by Christ and is animated by the Holy Spirit; **Catholic** because it

is universal, meaning that it is intended for all peoples in all places of the world; and **Apostolic** because of the unbroken line from the apostles to the bishops

whose teaching authority, the magisterium, can be traced to the teachings of Christ. We visited the four basilicas of Rome, which are Saint Mary Major, St. Peter's, St Paul's Outside the Walls and St. John Lateran.

Upon arrival in Rome on April 21st, we visited **Saint Mary Major**; in

Italian, **Santa Maria Maggiore**. The basilica was founded about 360 A.D. by Pope Liberius, on the site of an early apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The present building dates from



Entrance to Saint Mary Major

the time of Pope Sixtus III around 437 A.D. It contains many ancient mosaics from the period. It is said that the Athenian marble columns supporting the nave come from the first basilica, or from an antique Roman building. It is big in size and has beautiful artwork. The chapel in which we celebrated Mass was unique in that Father Charles had to face away from those in attendance. The structure from the outside was impressive because of the size of the basilica. In the courtyard was a column that had the statue of our Blessed Lady decorated in gold. The marks that were most apparent in this basilica were **Holy and Apostolic**. **Holy**, because the devotion of the people to God through Mary, was very evident. It was **Apostolic** because of its antiquity.

On April 23rd and 24th, we first visited St. John Lateran Basilica followed

by St. Peter's Basilica. St. John Lateran is considered the mother church of all churches in Rome and in the world. It is the cathedral Church of Rome. It was founded by Constantine during

the time of Pope Sylvester (314-33 A.D.) It has been destroyed and rebuilt many times. The church was originally built to promote the faith and to help maintain peace in the Roman Empire. It was built on private property owned by the Laterini family. This current structure dates from the 17th century. The statue of Constantine intrigued me because it had

been a statue that had been in one of the bath houses used in ancient Roman civilization.

As with all the basilicas we visited, the size of St. John Lateran is enor-



St. John Lateran's statue of Constantine

mous. It displays the mark of **Holy** because it features, as all the other basilicas, grandeur and many religious works of art, particularly the

statues that bring to mind those that have established the faith.

At St. Peter's Basilica, the tour guide explained that Emperor Constantine was the Christian emperor of Rome who ordered a basilica to be built on Vatican Hill where Saint Peter was buried in 64 A.D. The new church was completed circa 349 A. D. In the 15th century, Pope Nicolas V ordered the restoration and enlargement of the church with plans by Bernardo Rossellino. Pope Julius II laid the first stone of a new basilica which is the present building. Donato Bramante was the appointed architect of the new Basilica. In 1547, Michelangelo, who succeeded Bramante, designed the dome. St. Peter's basilica was dedicated by Pope Urban VIII in 1626. The basilica is truly impressive. It is the largest church in the world. It also includes many works by famous artists such as the Pieta by Michelangelo, the papal altar by Bernini, and the throne of St. Peter also by Bernini. Particularly impressive are the Swiss guards, who are the military guards of the Vatican and the Pope.

What can I say about St. Peter's? As the center of Christianity, one

can truly see the four marks of the Church. It was extremely evident at the installation of Pope Benedict XVI on the 24th of April. First of all it is **One** because the people who were there were all of the



St. Peter's Basilica

same faith participating in the installation of the pope who we accept as the earthly leader of our Church. Secondly, it is **Catholic**, since there were people of many nations in attendance that day. I heard people speaking Italian, French, German, Spanish, Vietnamese; and learned that there were people from Japan, India, Turkey, Ireland, and Spain. I mention only these because they are the ones that I was able to meet and hear during the installation of the pope. Thirdly, it is **Holy** because we were gathered around the Word and Sacrament of Christ Who is the head of the Church with all of us representing the body of the Church,

nearly 400,000 in attendance, united in the belief that Christ is our Savior. Finally it is **Apostolic**, because in this particular instance, we were at the installation of the successor of Peter, one of the twelve Apostles.

On the last day we went outside the



Statue of St. Paul at St. Paul's Outside the Walls

walls and visited the basilica of St. Paul which was built by Emperor Constantine in the 4th century. It was built beside the cemetery where St. Paul was buried after he was martyred. The entire church burned in 1823 and then was rebuilt in 1832. The walls refer to the Aurelian Wall, built by Marcus Aurelius in the 3rd century A.D. as a defense against barbarian invasion. In front of the basilica stands a statue of St. Paul, supposedly holding the sword with which he was beheaded.

To me, St. Paul's was architecturally the best and most graceful of the four

basilicas. Perhaps it was because it is relatively newer than the other three. As with the other three basilicas, it depicts the grandeur which one attributes to the Roman Empire of the time. St. Paul outside the Walls is very clean compared to the other three churches. The mark

that stands out in this church is **Apostolic** because inside, all of the portraits of the popes surround the upper part of the church, each one the successor of St. Peter. **Holy** is another mark because of the attraction that it brings out of the faith they have in St. Paul, the apostle who did the most for the gentiles in the beginning of the development

of the Church, so it represents the universality of the Church. Finally it is **One** in the sense that it unites all the Popes since the beginning of the Church established by Christ for what was to become the Roman Catholic Church.

Rome represents the vitality of the Church through brick, marble, paintings and of course the people. Wherever I walked there was the Church - One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. Visiting Rome and being in Vatican Square for the installation of a new pope, was truly an unbelievable experience. 

Perpetual Mass Association

The Missionaries of the Holy Family Perpetual Mass Association provides spiritual support for the living and many of life's journeys, and is also a support for the souls of the deceased. Since October 2004 the following persons have benefited from enrollment in the Perpetual Mass Association.

Mary Aboussie	Raymond DeFler	Lucie Huger	Newman-Landriau Family	John C. Rundle
Jay Aboussie	Joseph P. Delaney	Mary Ibarra	Refugia Nino	Frank Saenz
Roberto Alvarado	Cristobal & Francisca DeLeon	Julie Imo	Ramon Nino	Felix & Francisca Saenz
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Jose Amedran Family	Joe Dougherty	John Paul II	Lucila Noyola	Guillermo Salazar
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Antonia Arias	Robert L. Eggerman	Rebecca Gay Jones	David & Mary O'Brien	Coleta L. Sanchez
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*"... the breath of
the Almighty
keeps me alive."*

Job 33:4 (NAB)



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