

The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

"I baptize you..."



in the name of the Father..."

WINTER 2011 - 2012

The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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baptizing his great niece
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Provincial Perspective

Dear Family,

As we begin a new year, we cannot help but reflect on the past and think of the future. Day in and day out, we rely upon people in our lives doing what they say they are going to do. If this is true of human beings, how much more can we count on the Word of God!

God is not silent. He has spoken to humanity down through the ages. Through His holy Word, He reveals His love for us and His desire for our salvation. But God does not just speak. He acts. The Scriptures make it clear that God fulfills His promises. For this reason, it is important that we read the Word of God and trust that it will come to pass.

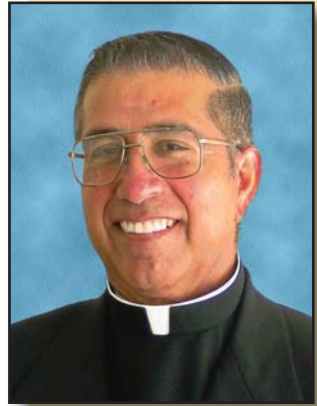
Looking forward as faithful witnesses of Jesus, given the situation of our world and society, we can make a difference by the way we live our lives. He has shown us how to love and be loved. Opening our hearts to Him will bring His love, including healing and peace to our families, friends, and all those we encounter on our earthly pilgrimage of faith.

Do you have any prayer requests? Please feel free to send your prayer intentions to us by using the return envelope in the middle of this issue of *The Messenger*.

With prayerful best wishes, I am
Eternally Yours in the Holy Family,

Fr. Phil Sosa, M.S.F.

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



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HOLY FAMILY SEMINARY ALUMNI

The Happiest Day of My Life

by Father Arthur Ockwood, M.S.F.

That I am a Catholic priest has nothing to do with me. It may sound odd to say that, but I truly believe that it was Jesus who called me, took me by the hand, and led me to the day of my ordination. Let me explain...



From a very early age, I experienced what I believe was an invitation from Jesus to follow Him as His priest. My desire to respond to His call was sincere. I was unaware, however, of all the trials and suffering I would encounter along the way. There came a time when I doubted myself, my abilities, and if I truly had a vocation to the priesthood. I decided not to take the road less traveled, but to go another way. Remember the saying, "Man proposes but God disposes?" It certainly applied to me. It is indeed true that God does hold each of us in the palm of His hand. And, His time is not our time. What He asks of us is that we never give up trusting Him. I did give up on Him,

but He never gave up on me. The more I tried to deny the desire to become a priest, the stronger it became. Finally, in the summer of 1951, I decided to seek admission to a seminary. Where to go? One thing I was sure of, I wanted to

join a missionary community. Who would accept me? I was 23 years old!

I felt there was no time to lose. I wanted to become a priest. I wrote to three religious communities seeking admission. The Missionaries of the Holy Family (MSF) was one of the communities that interested me the most. I had in my possession their vocational pamphlet. They admitted belated vocations, and that was who I was.

After mailing my requests to the three communities, I decided to make a novena to the Little Flower of Jesus, St. Theresa. I promised her that I would go to the first letter of acceptance I would receive before the end of my novena. Day after

day, I went to find nothing in the mailbox. On the last day of the novena, there it was - an answer to my prayers - a letter from the Missionaries of the Holy Family. It simply said, "You are accepted. Come as soon as possible." It was signed by Father Ernest Braun, M.S.F. With a quick thanks to the

even a small pond to enjoy.

The seminary building was a fantastic work of art. It was once a private home. The rooms on the first floor of the house were converted into classrooms, a dining room, a parlor, and a beautiful chapel that drew one into the presence of a loving, caring God. On the second floor,



Little Flower, I packed my bags and was on my way to Holy Family Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. I was going to become a priest, a member of the Missionaries of the Holy Family.

It was a beautiful, sunny day in St. Louis that greeted us as the doors of the plane opened. Father Ernest Braun, M.S.F., the rector of the seminary, welcomed me. The drive to the seminary located in Overland, Missouri did not take long. As we arrived at the seminary, I was captured by the beauty and serenity of the property. There were majestic oak trees, green grass, beautiful flowers, and



In July 2011, a new Crucifix was installed on the grounds of the old Holy Family Seminary to replace the one damaged by vandalism.



Father Ockwood had the privilege of meeting Christ's Vicar who is now known as Blessed Pope John Paul II.

there were offices and more classrooms. A third floor used for bedrooms and dormitories was added, and this addition made the building look even more impressive to the outside world.

The seminary buildings and grounds were indeed grand. However, its purpose was to provide a place for men seeking to become members of the Missionaries of the Holy Family and one day to be ordained priests. I finally felt I was where God wanted me to be.

The faculty members at Holy Family Seminary were priests from the M.S.F. community and St. Louis University. They were kind and considerate, but also quite demanding. Classes were conducted on a college level. Among the different studies, one class had this option offered to students: *get it or get*. It

was Latin. Father Joseph Groben, M.S.F. taught Latin, and he was a no nonsense teacher. Nine hours a week he conducted the class. He accepted no excuse if a student failed to keep up with him. Those who, through the grace of God and many hours of demanding studies and professors, successfully managed to persevere, were permitted to enter the novitiate. Two of us managed to make it.

The novitiate lasted a year. Accompanying us as novice master was none other than Father Joseph Groben, our Latin professor. The novitiate was a year set aside, apart from the formal studies, to learn more about the Missionaries of the Holy Family, their charisms, their way or rule of life, and their apostolic mission. It was a special time to discover more about the vows

of poverty, chastity, and obedience and how to live them. Above all, it was to serve as an occasion to discover and enter more deeply into the Life of Christ.

Father Groben made every effort to prepare us for the day we would make our profession of vows and become true members of the Missionaries of the Holy Family. It was August 15, 1954 that this took place. The novitiate completed, we began the two-year study of philosophy with Father George Schroer, M.S.F. Father Schroer was the most learned man I have known, and I had the privilege to have him as a teacher. He instilled in us deep respect and love for Thomistic philosophy. He opened the doors of our minds to seek the good. I remember reading (in Latin) our philosophy text book every evening before lights out (I learned to love Latin.).

Father Peter Roebrocks, M.S.F. was then the rector of the seminary. He taught us Greek, sociology, and clinical psychology. A professor from St. Louis University presented to us and instilled in us a deep appreciation for the writings of John Henry Cardinal Newman.

Two years of philosophy completed, we began a four year study of theology. Classes were taken at the seminary of the Resurrectionist Fathers located on their St. Louis Campus. At the end of the second year of theology, I received the

order of sub-deacon, with the order of deacon at the beginning of the third year. On May 30, 1959 at the end of the third year of theology, at the age of 31, I was ordained a priest.



Father Ockwood's ordination to the priesthood on May 30, 1959.

He is in the middle of the three kneeling candidates.

The day of my ordination to the priesthood was, and will always be, the happiest day of my life. Why God gave to me this tremendous gift is a mystery. I am most unworthy of this great gift of priesthood and will remain so forever. To my community, the Missionaries of the Holy Family, thank you for putting up with me. I love you and thank you for accepting me and giving me the opportunities I would have never had without you. Thank you for my priesthood. [M]

Check out our new website for seminary alumni: www.holyfamilyseminaryalumni.catholicweb.com



A FAMILY VACATION

The Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in the U.S. is in...

by Maury Prater, Advancement Director

- A.) Sacramento, California
- B.) San Antonio, Texas
- C.) Hanceville, Alabama

The answer is... C!

Yes, Hanceville, in rural Alabama, in Protestant country, in a sprawling metropolis of 3,000 people (more or less), give or take a few possums. Of all places, why Hanceville?

God works in mysterious ways, and He began working this miracle in 1995 through Mother Angelica, the Foundress of the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), a nun of the religious order of the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration, who is now 88 years old and bedridden. The following excerpts are taken from the website of Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, which is located on the campus of the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, www.olamshrine.com:

In 1995, Mother Angelica was traveling with two of her nuns in South America on business for EWTN. A Spanish television network was



in the works for Latin America, where so many Catholics were losing their faith. Colombia was among the countries that Mother visited, and, in Bogotá, a Salesian priest, Father Juan Pablo Rodriguez, brought Mother and the nuns to the Sanctuary of the Divine Infant Jesus to attend Mass. After Mass, Father Juan Pablo took them into a small shrine which housed the miraculous statue of the Child Jesus.

Mother Angelica stood praying at the side of the statue when suddenly the miraculous image came alive and turned towards her. Then

the Child Jesus spoke with the voice of a young boy, "Build Me a Temple, and I will help those who help you."

After coming home from the trip, Mother Angelica and the nuns began to look for land. At that time, the nuns were living in a convent on the studio grounds of EWTN in Irondale, Alabama, a suburb of Birmingham. After several months of searching, they came to Hanceville, Alabama, an hour's drive from Irondale. The property of interest was an isolated piece of farmland used to grow soybeans, almost completely surrounded by a river. From the very first moment that she set foot on the land, Mother Angelica said that she "felt the Presence of God very strongly."

From the very beginning of this adventure, the Providence of God was clearly evident. The nuns had no money to build, they never tried to raise funds for the cause, and they put their complete trust in Divine Providence. EWTN had no participation whatsoever in paying for any part of the Shrine. It was totally the project of the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration of Our Lady of the Angels Monastery. The Lord manifested His loving Providence again by inspiring five families to financially assist with the building of the Shrine. Each family wished their donation to remain anonymous, and the Child Jesus kept His promise to "help

those who help you."

Most of the construction took place during the three years of preparation for the Great Jubilee Year 2000. In 1997, the Year dedicated to Jesus Christ, the huge Monstrance was created. In 1998, the Year dedicated to the Holy Spirit, the Rose Window of the Holy Spirit was installed. In 1999, the Year dedicated to the Eternal Father, the Rose Window of God the Father was completed. This holy place is a miracle of God's Divine Providence, a Temple dedicated to the Divine Child Jesus, a place of refuge for all.

To plan a pilgrimage to the Shrine with your family, please visit the website, www.olamshrine.com, or call (205) 271-2917. Also:

- Consider staying at the guest house of St. Bernard's Abbey in Cullman, Alabama, www.stbernardabbey.com and (800) 722-0999, which is close to the Shrine by car.
- Adjacent to St. Bernard's Abbey is the magnificent Ave Maria Grotto, www.avemariagrotto.com and (256) 734-4110.
- Visit the Fatima Family Apostolate International, also in Hanceville, www.fatimafamily.org and (800) 213-5541.
- Take a tour of the EWTN Studios in Irondale, www.ewtn.com and (205) 271-2966.

God bless your family! 



WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

A Personal Prayer for Vocations

by Walter Lukaszek, Apostolate Board President

The final prayer we say each day, as Friends of the Holy Family Prayer Association, is for vocations. Vocational work has always been an important charism of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, to reach out for vocations, beginning with the founder, Father John Berthier. So we pray, *“Grant us all the grace to draw others to the Gospel, to promote vocations, and to commit ourselves to the pastoral care of families.”*



is calling? In examples from Scripture, like Samuel, who immediately went to Eli for better understanding of his call; or St. Paul, who immediately obeyed Christ, but needed the reluctant Ananias to provide the clarification; all of us need to reach out

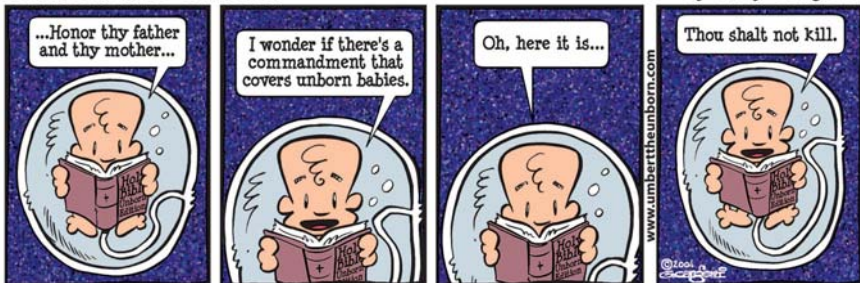
to others to help clarify what each is hearing from God. As Friends of the Holy Family Prayer Association, we pray for those searching for their vocation, the searchers, and for those who guide the searchers.

From where do vocations come? We know that each person’s vocation is a call from God. But, how does one know that it is God who

Each of us knows of individuals who are discerning, looking for what they will do in life. We may also know women and men who


Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi



are in houses of formation, praying and studying to deepen what they understand to be their vocation. Part of our role is to pray for those discerning their vocation, whatever the stage. As part of that effort, my wife Tina and I add the names of those whom we know are searching for the voice of God. We also pray for by name the seminarians and others aspiring to understand their vocation.

First of all, I encourage everyone to join our prayer association. Request a Friends Brochure using the envelope in the middle of this issue of *The Messenger*.

When praying the vocations prayer everyday, consider adding the names of those who you feel are discerning a vocation, including those in various stages of formation seeking to better understand God's call. 

The following is a suggested prayer for vocations that Tina and I pray daily:

Prayer for Vocations

Loving God and Father of all, we thank you for all that we are and have, and for all that we are able to do. We thank you most of all that through baptism we share in your life, and, through your Holy Spirit, are formed with Christ Jesus as your sons and daughters.

Dedicated to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and urged on by the charism of our founder, Father John Berthier, we pray that people of our time will be enlightened by the Spirit to discern their particular calling in life, especially (*add names of those you know*).

We pray especially for vocations which respond to the missionary task of the Church and contribute to the evangelization of all for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Enkindle with fire and zeal of your love the hearts of those whom you have called to evangelize in far away places, different cultures, and wherever the Gospel needs to be proclaimed.

Awaken within the hearts of many a call to minister as religious sisters and brothers; as deacons or priests; as married couples or as single persons. Grant us all the grace to draw others to the Gospel, to promote vocations, and to commit ourselves to the pastoral care of families. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph: enlighten us, help us, and save us. Amen.



THE POETRY CORNER

A Sign of Affection

© Mrs. Felipa Montoya

Parishioner at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Seguin, TX



Whenever I see a Catholic Church,
I make the Sign of the Cross,
To show my respect and my love,
To Him who is the King of the Universe.

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MISSION STATEMENT

*W*e, the Missionaries of the Holy Family of the North American Province, are united in religious community according to the purpose of our Founder, Father Jean Berthier, who dedicated our future and ministry to the ideals of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we respond to the missionary task of the Church and contribute to the evangelization of all for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Our Mission to evangelize encompasses far away places, different cultures, and wherever the Good News needs to be proclaimed. According to the gifts and talents of our members, we are moved to:

- Draw Others to the Gospel
- Promote Vocations
- Stress the Pastoral Care of Families

Jesus, Mary & Joseph: enlighten us, help us, and save us.

Amen.

Family

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

I want to share an idea of love,
For it was given to me from Our Father above.
Our Father did say, as He started to share,
“I’ve created this idea out of dirt and air.”
Now with this dirt, I sculpted man,
And with Divine breath, human life began.
I surveyed my creation and loved what I saw,
Hoping all the while there’d never be a flaw.
As centuries and millenniums quickly pass by,
I am left somewhat saddened with a tear in my eye.
What has man done to become so crude and cold,
When I’ve given my Son to repair the mold?
My Son, while with them on earth,
Showed them the realities brought forth at birth.
He learned from His father Joseph, a carpenter by trade,
How to show true compassion and forgive a debt unpaid.
Then there’s His mother, Joseph’s loving wife,
Chosen by God to bear perfect life.
As we study this group and learn from three,
We discern what is meant by family.
Now in the past, when families were strong,
Never did we think anything could go wrong.
Yet here we are as another millennium has spoken,
And we find families both battered and broken.
Yes, we could give up and look the other way,
But the Creator above really wants us to stay.
He’ll show us the way to turn families around,
If we just take the time for His love to abound.
I want you to know, as we ponder today,
God’s gift of family life is here to stay.
We may not be perfect, because human we are,
But God loves us still, all those near and afar.

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YOUTHFUL OUTLOOK

Be Not Afraid (No Tengas Miedo)!

by Julissa Rodriguez

For almost two years, Father Alberto Trevino, M.S.F. and 22 members of St. Joseph's Youth Ministry in Donna, Texas worked together to raise enough money to attend the World Youth Day (WYD) 2011 in Madrid, Spain. We thank the parishioners of St. Joseph's for their love and support. Because of you, we were able to raise enough money to get us there and back safely.

After months of fundraising and preparing for our pilgrimage, August 10, the day of our departure finally arrived, and we boarded the plane destined to take us across the Atlantic to our destination. Many of us had never been out of the country, or on a plane for that matter. Every single one of us was scared, excited, and wondering why we were chosen to go on this pilgrimage. What did God have in store for us; what did He want us to learn from our trip?

During our 11-day stay in Spain, we were able to take in the beautiful Spanish culture and its history, which is deeply rooted in Faith.

Not everyone in Madrid, however, was happy about WYD, but that didn't stop us from praising His name. God's love is too strong, our faith was too strong, everywhere we went we were crossing paths or attending events and Mass with other Catholics from all over the world. It was amazing. No matter where we were from, or what



The pilgrims pause beneath a statue of Blessed Pope John Paul II.

language we spoke, it didn't stop us from cheering, greeting, and enjoying each other's company.

After a few days, the message was clear, and I knew what God wanted us to know. He was telling us loud and clear: "Be not afraid, for you are not alone! Be not afraid, for I am with you always!"



What do you get when you add young religious sisters with members of St. Joseph's Youth Ministry? A bunch of joyful pilgrims, that's what!

God was the man from Australia trading souvenirs with us, or the French lady sitting next to us on the metro. He was everywhere! It was a beautiful feeling knowing that we were all there for the same reason, to give thanks to the Almighty for this life He gave us. Together, we rejoiced, praised His name, and showed our gratitude to God for giving us His Son, Jesus

this has changed our way of living and thinking. But, brothers and sisters, if we stand together in His name, if we believe that all things are possible through Him, and if we trust in Him, we will be blessed as one strong body, one faithful Church. [M](#)

Editor's Note: See more WYD pictures in the section on *Around the Province* on the next page.



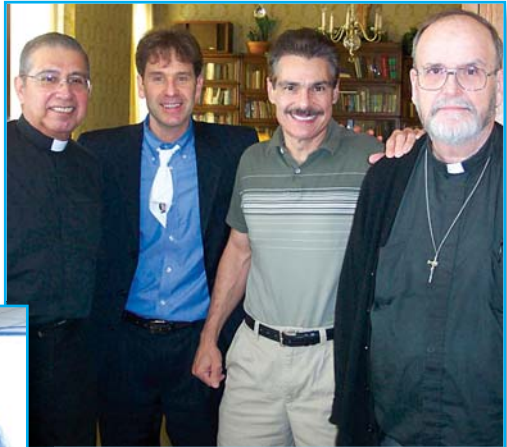
We are Catholic. Welcome home.

AROUND THE PROVINCE



▲ World Youth Day Pilgrims 2011: St. Joseph's Youth Ministry & Father Alberto Trevino, M.S.F.

Dr. Ray Guarendi, second from ▶ right, international Catholic speaker and author, was the featured presenter at a "Back to the Family" program at St. Wenceslaus Church in St. Louis in October 2011. After the program, Dr. Ray had lunch in the rectory with Holy Family priests and other guests.



◀ In October 2011, the Knights of Columbus in Seguin, Texas honored Brother Rolland Kapsner, M.S.F. on his 50th anniversary as a member of the Knights of Columbus. Grand Knight Greg Seidenberger presented Brother Rolland with an award of excellence. Congratulations, Sir Knight Brother Rolland!

AROUND THE PROVINCE

At a special Mass in October 2011 ▶ at St. Wenceslaus Church in Saint Louis, Father Jim Beegan, M.S.F., along with Deacon George Miller, installed four new permanent members of the Holy Family Prayer Association. From left to right are Mrs. Rosemary Rivituso, Mrs. Carmelita Pelch, and Miss Sue Baskin. Not pictured is Rosa Sanchez.



◀ At the Council of the Congregation Meeting in Santa Cruz, Bolivia in September 2011, Father Phil Sosa, M.S.F., seated in the middle, celebrated one of the daily Masses with Father Leo from Brazil (left, green stole) and Father Tito from Chile.

The families of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in ▶ Seguin, Texas, held their Labor Day Bazaar 2011, and “two clowns” showed up with a pony. The clown on the left is parishioner Mrs. Stella Ozuna, and the clown on the right is parishioner Dr. Terri Quebedeaux, D.P.M. Dr. Terri is also a member of the Apostolate Board for the Missionaries of the Holy Family.





PARENTS TIME OUT

Love without Discipline is Child Abuse


Contributed by Dr. Ray Guarendi

When I was a young shrink in training – a “shrinking?” – I imbibed a load of parenting techniques. “Have tools, will travel,” was my motto. As I counseled more parents, I was forced to conclude: Offering ideas is the easier part; the challenge lies in convincing a parent to implement these ideas.

While most parents have a good sense of what makes for solid discipline, many have reasons that stay their hand. They’re tired, or feel guilty that they’re being mean, or fear parenting “mistakes,” or disagree with their spouse, or think their kids will rebel, or face a mother-in-law who already sees them as the nastiest witch/warlock to fly across the face of the earth.

No matter the resistance, one overarching reality rules: A loving parent is his child’s kindest, most gentle teacher about life. Never again will that little person receive the unconditional love, the benefit of the doubt, or the forgiveness offered by a good parent (good spouses excepted).

If a parent disciplines weakly today, the world will discipline strongly tomorrow. And the world hurts. If

a child acts nasty, he sits on the couch. Brutal. If an adult acts nasty, he could get fired, punched, or have to sleep on the couch or in the basement. The stakes are higher as kids get older. To put it bluntly: **Don’t let the world discipline your children.** 

“Discipline without love may be harsh.

Love without discipline is child abuse.”

Dr. Ray Guarendi

Raising Good Kids: Back to Family Basics, p. 30-31. Copyright © 2011, Dr. Ray Guarendi. Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.



Dr. Ray Guarendi

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



Missionaries of the Holy Family
Family • Vocations • Missions

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Welcome! We are a worldwide, Roman Catholic religious order of over 900 priests and brothers, faithful to Jesus Christ and His Vicar, emphasizing the Holy Family as the standard of holiness for all families. We also help laypeople discern their vocation, religious or secular, in caring for the family.

Consecrate your family to the Holy Family!
[Please click here.](#)



GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE



CARING FOR YOUR FAMILY



PRAYER AND THE HOLY FAMILY

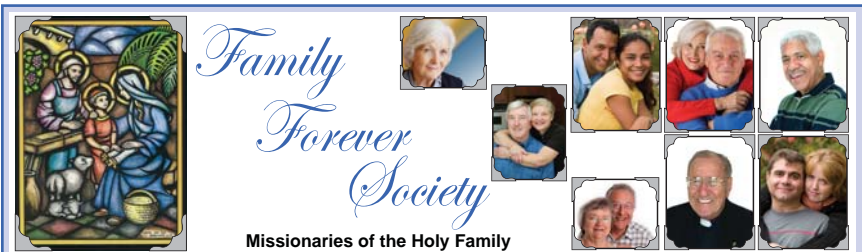
Our Video on EWTN.

FIND CATHOLIC BUSINESSES 

Thank You & God Bless You, to everyone who made a financial gift in the 2011 calendar year.

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

You are remembered in our prayers.



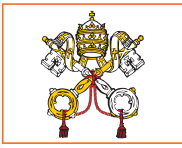
Family Forever Society

Missionaries of the Holy Family

Where there is a Will... there is a Way to make a Difference.

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

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



Pope Benedict XVI's Prayer Intentions

January 2012

General Intention: That the victims of natural disasters may receive the spiritual and material comfort they need to rebuild their lives.

Missionary Intention: That the dedication of Christians to peace may bear witness to the name of Christ before all men and women of goodwill.

February 2012

General Intention: That all peoples may have access to water and other resources needed for daily life.

Missionary Intention: That the Lord may sustain the efforts of health workers assisting the sick and elderly in the world's poorest regions.

March 2012

General Intention: That the whole world may recognize the contribution of women to the development of society.

Missionary Intention: That the Holy Spirit may grant perseverance to those who suffer discrimination, persecution, or death for the name of Christ, particularly in Asia.

April 2012

General Intention: That many young people may hear the call of Christ and follow Him in the priesthood and religious life.

Missionary Intention: That the risen Christ may be a sign of certain hope for the men and women of the African continent.

May 2012

General Intention: For the Family -- that initiatives which defend and uphold the role of the family may be promoted within society.

Missionary Intention: That Mary, Queen of the World and Star of Evangelization, may accompany all missionaries in proclaiming her Son Jesus.

June 2012

General Intention: That believers may recognize in the Eucharist the living presence of the Risen One who accompanies them in daily life.

Missionary Intention: That Christians in Europe may rediscover their true identity and participate with greater enthusiasm in the proclamation of the Gospel.



Photo Credit: Helen Blakesley/Catholic Relief Services

Regarding HIV/AIDS, which has brought untold death and suffering to Africa: "Above all, it is an ethical problem. The change of behavior that it requires, for example, sexual abstinence, rejection of sexual promiscuity, fidelity within marriage – ultimately involves the question of integral development, which demands a global approach and a global response from the Church."

-- Visit to Africa: Closing Mass, November 2011



WHAT IS GOD'S PHONE NUMBER?

I Love to Teach, but I'd Rather Preach

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

Ever since I was a child, I felt a calling from God to a vocation in the



Father Mario Galindo, M.S.F.
You can contact Father Mario about Vocations by calling 1-888-484-9945.

Church. In my younger years, I would listen to stories about the lives of saints, and I would daydream about being in their

place. The life story of St. Martin de Porres made a great impression on me. I heard his life story through a novella (soap opera) on the radio. It spoke of his humility and his ability to survive his hardships through his love of God. In catechism class, the Sisters would tell us about other saints, like St. Francis of Assisi, who established his community of beggars.

A few years later, someone else caught my interest. I had already started school, and my teachers became the focus of my attention. For example, my third grade teacher, Mrs. Children, was wonderful.

She gave us her best, and we were attentive to her instructions. Mr. Gutierrez, my fifth grade teacher, applied discipline, even though he was kind and gentle. In junior high school, I joined the band program. In high school, I was fortunate to have Mr. Eddie Galvan as band director. His positive teaching methods were motivational for learning and doing our best; so much so that many of his students became band directors.

I became a band director and taught in the Texas Public School system for 32 years. It was a delightful experience, and I enjoyed every



Father Mario with students at all male Christian Brothers College High School in St. Louis.

minute of it. Whether it was competition time, a time for discipline and rigid preparation, or just simply enjoying ourselves in the making


of music, there was never a dull moment! The experience of interacting with young men and women

director. Retirement came, but my time was not bearing any fruitful results. Now, unlike the time I was

teaching, I had no excuse for not answering God's invitation to His service. So, I finally said, "YES!"

Now that I am a priest, I often ask myself

why I took so long to answer God's gracious vocational calling to the priesthood. Although I love to teach, I'd much rather preach.

If God is calling you, please take the call. Don't put Him on hold! You will never regret it. Every day is a happy day for me. Should you miss the call, however, try reaching Him at this toll-free number, 1-888-484-9945. God bless you. 



Sister Isabella, from the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George, teamed up with Father Mario for the vocation presentation at Valle Catholic High School (co-ed) in the Archdiocese of St. Louis.



who loved music as much as I did was the cause for my happiness.

However, even after all these years of teaching, I still had the longing, the "call," to be in the service of the Lord. God kept calling me to His service while I was teaching band, but I would dismiss the call in favor of the work I was doing as a band



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First & Last Name _____ or Youth

_____ Street Address _____

_____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

_____ Phone _____

_____ Parish Name (if known) _____

Your Contact Information (required):

_____ First & Last Name _____

_____ Street Address _____

_____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

_____ Phone _____

_____ Parish Name _____



DEAR FATHER

Ask Father John

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

Q: *Dear Father,* *Could you explain what a sacrament is, how many there are, and why they are necessary? Also, what is the difference between a sacrament and a sacramental?*

A: There are seven sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ that actually confer the grace they signify, namely:

1. Baptism
2. Confirmation
3. Holy Eucharist
4. Penance
5. Anointing of the Sick
6. Holy Orders
7. Matrimony

In each of these, Christ Himself meets us and ministers to us through the ministry of His Body, the Church. These sacraments are necessary because we desperately need God's grace, and He has chosen to give us certain kinds of grace through the sacraments.

The first three, Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist, are called the Sacraments of Christian Initiation. These three sacraments are the foundation for the Christian life. In fact, without Baptism one cannot receive any of the other sacraments — it is the door to all the other sacraments.

In the early Church, these three sacraments were received together at the Easter Vigil, but there is evidence that infant Baptism was also practiced at this time. Later, Christianity became the state religion, and, with so many wanting to join the Church, there was the problem of not having enough bishops to confirm the faithful, so Confirmation was put off to a later date.


Since the restoration of the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults), we now have returned the order of these sacraments to their proper place, but for children of Catholic parents, it is still Baptism and then later Holy Eucharist and finally Confirmation.

The next two, the Sacraments of Penance and the Anointing of the Sick, are called the Sacraments of Healing. Christ, the physician of our soul and body, instituted these sacraments because the new life that He gives us in the Sacraments of Christian Initiation can be weak-

ened and even lost because of sin. Therefore, Christ willed that His Church should continue His work of healing and salvation by means of these two sacraments.

The final two, the Sacrament of Holy Orders and the Sacrament of Matrimony, are the Sacraments at the Service of Communion and Mission. These two sacraments, Holy Orders and Matrimony, confer a special grace for a particular mission in the Church to serve and build up the People of God. These sacraments contribute in a special way to ecclesial communion and to the salvation of others.

The main difference between a sacrament and a sacramental is that Christ instituted the sacraments and the Church instituted and can abolish sacramentals (according to the authority given by Christ to His Church).

A sacrament imparts grace in the virtue of the rite itself, while the grace of sacramentals depends on the dispensations of the recipient and the intercession of the Church. Some sacramentals are objects such as holy water, scapulars, medals, and rosaries. Others are actions such as blessings and exorcisms. I enthusiastically encourage you, and every Catholic family, to purchase a copy of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which is a great help in answering many questions and an invaluable aid in building up the Faith. God bless you. 



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



Pieta Votive Candles

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



A PROFILE OF SERVICE

Father Jim's Story

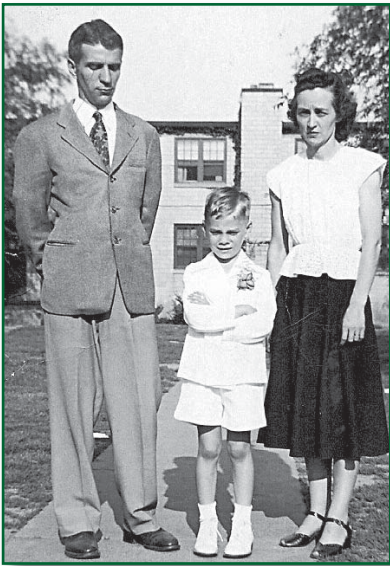
by Maury Prater, Advancement Director
(and Members of Father Jim's Family)

On March 6, 1942, the first of Eddie Paul & Mary Ruth Wuerth's seven children was born in Louisville, Kentucky. Two decades later, in 1963, James Edward Wuerth entered Holy Family Seminary in Saint Louis, Missouri. On June 13, 1971,



Jimmy around one year of age.

Archbishop Thomas McDonough, the archbishop of Louisville at the time, ordained him as a priest of Jesus Christ at Most Blessed Sacrament Church in Louisville, at the very parish where Father Jim and all his siblings faithfully attended Mass and grade school.



Jimmy at the age of eight, with his father and mother, on the day of his First Communion.



Jimmy at the age of 11, standing next to his sister Lucille. Sitting in the wagon, left to right, are siblings Mary Frances, Bobby, Joe Paul, and Ruth Ann. Billy was not born yet.

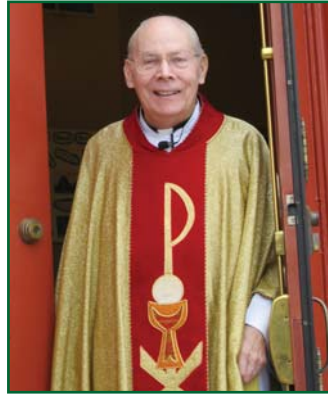
Father Jim went on to serve in parishes in Kentucky, California, Minnesota, and Texas. He also served in hospital ministries and in Formation. In 2001, St. Wenceslaus Parish in Saint Louis became Father Jim's new home, where he is still serving as pastor today.

Q: *Why did you become a priest?*

A: From early childhood, I identified myself with several of our parish priests, whom I wanted to be like. They were very giving of themselves, to the young and old alike. I could tell that they were happy men and a joy to be around. I saw Jesus in them!

Q: *Why did you choose the Missionaries of the Holy Family (M.S.F.)?*

A: I inquired into various religious orders, but I was particularly struck by the Missionaries of the Holy Family because of their sense of family, their warmth and hospitality, and their commitment to serve as missionaries wherever the Church needed them. The only communication I had with the Missionaries of the Holy Family was in written correspondence with the vocation director at the time, Father Bill Peters, M.S.F., who was so personable and congenial in his letter writing, that I soon became "sold on wanting to join" the M.S.F.



Rev. James Edward Wuerth, M.S.F.

40 Years of Priesthood

Born: March 6, 1942

Age: 69

Hometown:
Louisville, KY

Hometown Parish:
Most Blessed Sacrament

Confirmation Name:
William

Patron Saint:
Blessed Virgin Mary

M.S.F. Formation:
Entered Holy Family Seminary
Overland, MO
August 1963

Ordained:
June 13, 1971

Hobbies:
Liturgical Music

Last Book Read:
Jesus of Nazareth, Vol. 1
by Pope Benedict XVI

Motto:
"A smile is never done in vain."



Jim Wuerth as a young Scholastic, 24 or 25 years old, with his sister Lucille.

Q: *How is M.S.F. different from other religious orders?*

A: First of all, we have a lot in common with many other missionary communities in that we are international and relatively new. We've only been around since 1895. But the real difference is the emphasis on family and a simplicity of life in community and ministry.

Q: *What roles have the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph played in your life?*

A: I've had a devotion to Our Lady since I was a small child, often praying the Rosary. During my novitiate year, at which period much time is spent in prayer, in studying the spiritual life, and in meditation, my devotion to Our Blessed Mother grew stronger. At the same time, I began to esteem St. Joseph for being the Head of the Holy Family, the husband of Mary, and the earthly father of Jesus.

Q: *How can devotion to the Holy Family help families today?*

A: The Holy Family is the model, the standard of holiness for the family. Basically, every family is called to be a holy family, for the "universal call to holiness" hits to the core of the family. The family is the "little church," the "little parish," for it is where the Church is born.

Q: *Servant of God Father John Berthier is the founder of M.S.F. If he was alive today, what advice would he have for M.S.F.?*

A: Father Berthier read the signs of the times in his age: the need for restoration of the Christian family and the need for upholding the sacredness of all vocations, with an urgent call to foster and nourish belated religious vocations to the priesthood and brotherhood.

As a faithful Servant of the Church, he would "think with the Church" of our time. He would be in tune with living out the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and consequently the pastoral mandates of our Holy Father and the bishops. His advice to M.S.F. would be, "Let's get with it!"

He would certainly be implementing the New Evangelization and seriously addressing such current issues as world poverty, materialism, and the Culture of Death.

Q: Finish this sentence: If I could be Pope Benedict XVI for one day, the first thing I would do is...

A: ...proclaim a Year of Prayer & Penance for healing and reconciliation among all “catholic” divisions within the Roman Rite.

Q: Father Joe Lawless, M.S.F. and Father Ernesto Perez, M.S.F. also celebrated 40 years as priests in 2011. Do you have any memorable experiences of them?

A: Mainly, a strong bond. I am very happy for them. Father Joe came to my ordination, and I went to his. There is a moving story of another priest who was our classmate, Father Cornelius Crowley, M.S.F. Father Cornelius had two dreams: to be a priest and to return to Ireland, his homeland. Both of his dreams came true. Father Cornelius celebrated his first solemn Mass in Ireland, but then he tragically died later in a matter of weeks. Father Cornelius – a wonderful person and a priestly vocation fulfilled!

Q: Arriving at your first parish as a priest, what impact did that have on you?

A: My first parish, as an Associate Pastor or Parochial Vicar, was St. Camillus in a poor part of Los Angeles. It was a mix of Hispanics,

African Americans, and Asians; a great diversity. Then I served at St. Albert the Great in Compton, California which was even more diverse: 90% African American and Cajun and 10% Hispanic.

These experiences helped prepare me to effectively minister to diverse families in diverse circumstances, always reminding me of the unity and universality of the Church among many diversities.



The Three Musketeers of Our Lady of Guadalupe's First Friday Mass & Breakfast are, left to right: Danny Herrera, Jim Van Rosendael, and Fred Schaker.

Q: I had the pleasure of attending a First Friday Mass & Breakfast at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Seguin, Texas. The Mass & Breakfast have become quite famous. You were there when it first began. How did it come to be what it is today?

A: I believe it was all guided by the Holy Spirit. There was always a good crowd for the First Friday Mass, and we just extended the fellowship afterwards by offering

coffee and doughnuts. That was it! The Holy Spirit took over, and it just keeps growing.

Editor's Note: A young girl of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish was learning about the saints during religious education classes. She learned that St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, inspired by Jesus Christ, began the First Friday Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the 17th century. This young girl was also a fan of the First Friday Mass & Breakfast because she was fond of doughnuts. When she was asked to name her favorite saint, she chose St. Margaret Mary, and she called her the "patron saint of doughnuts!"



Father Jim with his youngest brother Billy at their parents' gravesite.

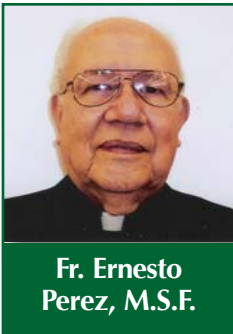
Q: What are your dreams for the future?

A: You've heard the saying, "I want to die with my boots on." That's my dream: to joyfully work as a priest as long as God wills me to do so.

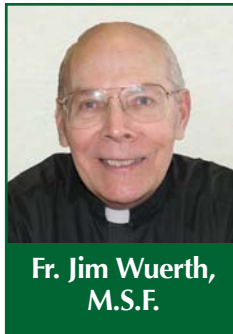
Q: Speaking of the Lord, when you finally come face-to-face with Him, what will you say?

A: Thank you, Lord, for my parents and all my family. Thank you for my vocation to the Priesthood and the Missionaries of the Holy Family. Thank you for everyone who's been a fiber of my life at any time and at any place.

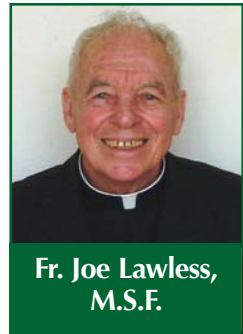
Men of God: Priests for 40 Years



Fr. Ernesto Perez, M.S.F.



Fr. Jim Wuerth, M.S.F.



Fr. Joe Lawless, M.S.F.

Tributes: If you would like to make a tribute gift in honor of one of these Men of God, please use the envelope found in the middle of this issue of *The Messenger*, or make your gift online at www.MSF-America.org.



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***“And behold,
I am with you
always, until
the end of
the age.”***

Matthew 28:20

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