

SCJ NEWS

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

August 2010

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A second term for Fr. Cassidy; new faces on Provincial Council

“We all know the many challenges we face, the difficulties they cause us and the limits they place upon us,” said Fr. Tom Cassidy, SCJ, in his opening remarks to members of the province at the election assembly. “That being said, if we listen to the Spirit in the depth of our hearts, and if we are respectful and attentive to what our brothers are saying to us, perhaps we can begin to wonder, and out of that wonder imagine, and out of that imagining we can change. In that change we just might truly become prophets of love and servants of reconciliation.”

A day after he made those remarks Fr. Tom was elected to his second three-year term as provincial superior of the U.S. Province.

He and the newly elected five-member council were installed during a July 26 liturgy at Sacred Heart School of Theology.

Familiar face in administration

Fr. Cassidy, 67, was first elected as provincial superior in 2007. At the time of his election, he was president-rector of Sacred Heart School of Theology in Hales Corners, Wis.



Before assuming duties at Sacred Heart, Fr. Cassidy served two terms on the General Council of the Priests of the Sacred Heart in Rome. Prior to his first-term election in 1991, he was on the provincial staff for the U.S. Province. He came to the Provinciate after serving as principal



ABOVE: Fr. John Czyzynski, SCJ, a former provincial superior and councilor, congratulates Br. Duane Lemke, SCJ, on his election to the Provincial Council. BELOW: as it did following the previous election, the province gathered for a transitional assembly during which the new administration was installed. It began with a prayer service to remember those who had died during the past three years.



The new administration: Br. Duane Lemke, Fr. Ed Kilianski, Fr. Byron Haaland, Fr. Tom Cassidy, Fr. Jack Kurps and Fr. Bill Pitcavage.

and then as superintendent of St. Joseph's Indian School in Chamberlain, S.D. Fr. Cassidy was also principal of Divine Heart Seminary in Donaldson, Ind., and spent several years teaching.

Fr. Cassidy is a 1971 graduate of Sacred Heart School of Theology, and also holds a master's degree in political science from Catholic University in Washington, D.C., and a second master's degree in religious studies from Mundelein College in Chicago. In 1978, he earned an Education Specialist (EdS) degree in School Administration from Ball State University in Muncie, Ind.

Currently, Fr. Cassidy is also president of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) in the United States.

A Milwaukee native, Fr. Cassidy professed his first vows with the community in 1962 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1971.

New faces

Only one of the five elected has previously been on the Provincial Council: Fr. Jack Kurps, SCJ, who served during the past two administrations. The rest of the council includes Fr. Byron Haaland, SCJ, Fr. Ed Kilianski, SCJ, Br. Duane Lemke, SCJ, and Fr. Bill Pitcavage, SCJ.

Fr. Bill was the first to be elected and following tradition, as the first he will also serve as vice-provincial.

Originally from Long Island, NY, Fr. Bill was in the Navy medical corps before entering candidacy with the Priests of the Sacred Heart. He was professed in 1969 and ordained in 1976. Fr. Bill is a graduate of Sacred Heart School of Theology.

Along with his call to religious life he said that he almost always felt a desire to serve as a missionary, "along with the grace needed to go with it, the ability to be in a different environment and adapt to it," he said.

His first assignment after ordination was at St. Joseph's Indian School where he was a resident director and chaplain. Two years later, he was ministering at a technical school in Lesotho, a small, economically depressed country surrounded by South Africa. The Lesotho project didn't last long, but going to Africa confirmed Fr. Bill's desire for missionary service. After a short stint back in the States, Fr. Bill returned to Africa, first filling in for Msgr. Aloysius Dettmer, SCJ, in Middelburg (American SCJ Fr. John Strittmatter now serves there). In 1983, Fr. Bill began ministry at St. Patrick parish in Port Elizabeth. He also served two terms as superior of what was then the Region of De Aar.

In 1999 he returned to ministry in the United States, first on the Cheyenne River Reservation. In 2001 he was named pastor of St. James parish in Chamberlain, SD, where he continues to minister.

Always wanted to be a priest

Fr. Ed Kilianski, 55, has served in vocations, in ministry to those living with HIV/AIDS, as province justice and peace director and in parish ministry. He was professed in 1975 and ordained in 1983.

"When I was seven years old, Pope John XXIII died and on the radio they said that he wanted to be a priest when

With out-going and incoming councilors looking on, Fr. Tom Cassidy renews his commitment to province leadership.



he was 11 years old," said Fr. Ed. "I said to my mom and dad that, 'I'm only seven and I want to be a priest, does that mean that someday I'll be the pope?'"

"They laughed as everyone does when I tell the story but somehow I knew that one day I would be a priest."

He told that story to parishioners when he introduced himself as the new pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Houston, Texas in 2008. He came to the assignment after a six-month study sabbatical in Mexico to improve his Spanish language skills. Although he had done several month-long study sessions, it was the extended time in Mexico that strengthened both his language skills and his call to Hispanic ministry.

"To be immersed in Spanish for six months; to celebrate the Mass and get to know the people; this made a huge impact on me," said Fr. Ed. "I just felt that it was where the Lord was leading me, where I was being called in ministry."

Now he is being called to another ministry: provincial leadership.

"It was both humbling and affirming when my name was brought forth during the election assembly," he said. At the same time it made me a little nervous. My thoughts were 'how am I going to do this and be the pastor at Our Lady of Guadalupe?' In the end, I gave it over to the Holy Spirit and trusted that if this is what the community wanted, I was willing to serve...

"For me, I see provincial administration as a ministry of service. In Spanish, there's an expression that is used everywhere in Mexico which says, 'Para servirles' (in order to serve you). As a Priest of the Sacred Heart, I am here to serve.

"Our Constitutions state that the 'service of authority is a true ministry.' [#107] Also, I firmly believe that 'Within our communities, it is in true and fraternal dialogue, in the light of and with a view toward the common good, that we search together for the will of God.' [No. 109] I hope to be someone who listens to and who collaborates with all our brothers for the common good."

Home-grown vocation

Br. Duane Lemke, 38, is a "home-grown" SCJ. Professed in 1997, he grew up in an SCJ parish in South Dakota and as a teen, worked for the SCJ community when it had a pastoral team in Eagle Butte, SD.

"I came to the Priests of the Sacred Heart in January, 1995, after my collegiate years at the University of Mary in Bismarck, N.D.," said Br. Duane. He earned a master's degree in Pastoral Studies from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, but said that in formation he also "began to learn how to be a Priest of the Sacred Heart: one who is called to promote God's love in the heart of people and society." Unlike CTU, his study of the later has no graduation date. He adds that it is a "lifelong course of study!"

His first ten years of ministry were in and around Lower Brule, S.D. "As a member of the Catholic Pastoral Team, I ministered to youth and elders, taught religious education to youth and adults, and was a pastoral associate to St. Michael's Parish in Kennebec," he said. "Memories of the people, events and experiences I had there will always be with me, and continue to influence my ministry."

Br. Duane is now director of the province formation program in Chicago. "Formation ministry is quite different from parish ministry, but I count myself fortunate to be with these young men as they celebrate, struggle and study at school while preparing themselves for novitiate and religious life."



Clockwise from upper right: Frater Duy Nguyen does a reading; Fr. John van den Hengel, general councilor, was the main celebrant at the opening Mass of the election assembly; Novice Joseph Vu counts voters present; Fr. Greg Murray of the Canadian Region was moderator of the election assembly.

Continuing to serve

Returning to the council after serving in Fr. Tom's first administration, as well as during the term of Fr. Richard MacDonald, SCJ, is Fr. Jack Kurps.

Originally from Chicago, Ill., Fr. Jack professed vows with the Priests of

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the Sacred Heart in 1972 and was ordained in 1977.

His first assignment landed him in a place that he still enjoys calling home: Mississippi. Starting in 1980 at Queen of Peace parish in Olive Branch, Miss., he is now executive director of Sacred Heart Southern Missions, which is a combination of what used to be SHSM and the Sacred Heart League.

For eight years Fr. Jack was director of the province vocation office. He has also served the province on a variety of committees and commissions, and was a delegate to the 1997 general chapter.

"I have always found it to be affirming to be nominated for the council; it is even more so to be elected," said Fr. Jack. "The past six years have required a commitment of time and energy not only for the council meetings themselves but for meeting preparation, teleconference calls, emails and travel. But, I have enjoyed it and found it to be rewarding as well as challenging. I consider service to the province to be an important part of who I am. I look forward to serving as a member of this administration as the province together creates our future."

Based in SCJ spirituality

Fr. Byron Haaland, 61, was the fifth councilor elected. A California native, he professed vows in 1970 and was ordained in 1977.

Formation, spirituality, and retreat ministry have been the mainstays of Fr. Byron's life as an SCJ. He was on the formation team of the Chicago House of Studies, of the undergraduate formation program in San Antonio, and for the North American novitiate in Detroit.

However, it is retreat ministry which has had a special place in his heart since he directed his first retreat as a deacon. For many years, his retreat work was based out of St Joseph's Retreat Center in Baileys Harbor, Wis. But he has also traveled the country, and internationally, giving retreats for a wide variety of groups and organiza-

tions.

In the 1980s and 1990s Fr. Byron served on the Wisconsin State Board for Adult Children of Alcoholics. "We focused on getting information to teachers, administrators, counselors and parents to help them understand how alcohol and drugs affect children."

Out of that experience came a retreat series that Fr. Byron developed for adult children of alcoholics. He spent eight years presenting the retreat around the country, including at Sacred Heart School of Theology, where it was done as a part of the continuing education program.

He has also presented retreats to participants in Alcoholics Anonymous. "There are many similarities in 12-step programs and SCJ spirituality," he said. "I think that SCJ spirituality kind of 'catapults' you into a poverty of spirit that helps you to see your powerlessness." And from that sense of "powerlessness," said Fr. Byron, one realizes that it is only through God that "we can do anything."

With a full schedule that includes ministry at St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care in Milwaukee and serving with the formation department at Sacred Heart School of Theology, Fr. Byron has had to lessen his retreat schedule a bit in recent months.

But whatever he does he said that

the basis is always the same: SCJ spirituality.

"Welcoming the spirit, responding to Christ's love, seeking union and communion with Jesus, and co-operating in the work of redemption. That is SCJ spirituality in a nutshell."

It's the base of his retreat ministry, and the base of everything else he does.

Continuing in administration

Several appointments were made by the new administration soon after its election. Dn. David Nagel, SCJ, will continue to serve as province treasurer and Br. Frank Presto, SCJ, will remain as provincial secretary. Other provincial appointments will be made in September.

Walking together toward the future

Following a tradition began in 2007, members of the U.S. Province were invited to a two-day assembly as a sort of "kick-off" for the new provincial administration.

Meetings took place at the Provincial Conference Center on the grounds of Sacred Heart Mon-



The newest member of the province, Fr. Hendrik (center) voted in his first election assembly

astery/School of Theology July 26-27. The new administration was blessed and installed during an evening liturgy on the first day. Fr. Vien Nguyen, SCJ, the youngest member of the outgoing council, was the main celebrant and led the installation ceremony.

A significant focus of the July gathering was discussion of a province "program." The general administration put together a plan for its six-year term. Similarly, provinces, regions and districts have also been asked to develop a plan or program.

Using the general plan as a starting point for a province program, the newly elected provincial administration identified eight areas of focus for the U.S. Province: 1) spirituality, 2) our life in common, 3) vocations, 4) formation — both initial and on-going, 5) justice, peace and reconciliation, 6) ministries, 7) mission and international collaboration, and 8) communication.

Those at the assembly discussed the eight headings. They reflected on each topic in general, and then gave specific suggestions for action.

Much of the talk focused on the sharing of SCJ spirituality. How can SCJ parishes and other ministries become more "Dehonian?" How can SCJ spirituality be shared with others? And, how can SCJs better learn about and discuss their spiritual heritage?

Over and over, SCJs came back to the same conclusion: everything flows out of spirituality. Ministry, life in community, prayer, communication, vocational development — "everything that is SCJ," said a member at the assembly, "everything that we do and who we are flows out of our spirituality."

There was a call to be "more international." It is hoped that more members of the province can experience the wider congregation, both those in formation and those who have been in vows for many years. Hand in hand with that, there was a call for more members of the province to try to learn a second language.

Vocational development as a

province commitment — not simply the task of a few people in the vocation office — was discussed. How can the membership learn to better welcome others to the community? Can new methods of outreach be utilized? How can the province make the best use of the internet?

Reflecting on past efforts with justice and peace several SCJs suggested that the province focus on one or two areas where it can have impact, such as immigration.

And while present communication structures have served the province well, including province publications and web-based resources, SCJs called for better inter-

personal communication. How can local communities discuss province concerns and give feedback to other communities and province administration? How can the internet be better used to share the SCJ message with others?

The council will review the input it received at the assembly and use it to formulate the province program. It is hoped that the program can be finalized by the end of the year.

PHOTOS: More photos from both the Election Assembly and the Transition Assembly can be viewed at: www.scjusa.smugmug.com

Remembering Br. Larry...

Br. Larry Gauthier, 83, died earlier this summer. Professed in 1952, he had been with the SCJs for almost 60 years.

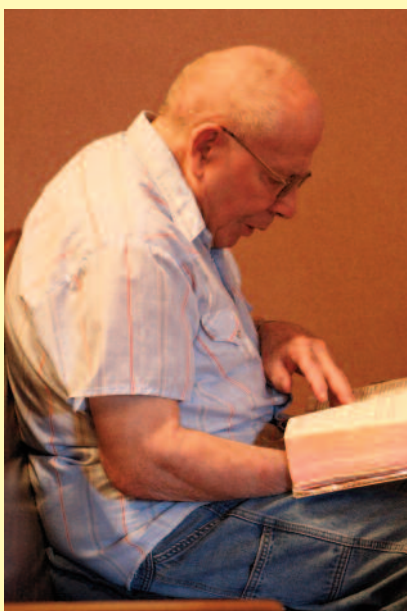
Originally from Montana, Br. Larry was a man who quietly worked in the background of the province. His first assignment was at Sacred Heart Monastery where worked the farm that was once associated with it. He then went to the SCJs' Kilroe Seminary in Pennsylvania, where he did similar work.

He continued to take care of maintenance, carpentry and farm needs at Divine Heart Seminary and later at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary.

Eventually the farms that helped to support the seminaries were phased out and Br. Larry moved to support roles at Sacred Heart School of Theology, St. Lawrence parish in San Antonio and with the SCJ community in Raymondville, Texas.

In 2001 Br. Larry retired and joined the Villa Maria community. During the past year he lived at the Congregational Home in Brookfield, Wis., where he died.

A familiar site in the Villa Maria chapel for many years: Br. Larry at prayer



SCJ ministry returns to St. Teresa Mission

Roots of South African Province in rural mission

A first-time visitor to St. Teresa Mission in the Diocese of Aliwal North, South Africa, notices many things. First, there are the children. Young children and teenagers; laughing, playing games and practicing music for an upcoming Mass.

There are ladies in purple, representing the St. Ann Society. Other women pour out from the kitchen, hands busy, preparing a feast-day meal.

And soccer balls. During 2010 — the year of the World Cup — it seems that soccer balls are everywhere.

Two young SCJ priests — Frs. Ntsikelelo Bambatha and Joshua Morosi Mpiti — wander between the joyful chaos. Ordained in December, 2009, they are the reason that the Priests of the Sacred Heart are back at St. Teresa following a five-year hiatus.

“God is very good to us,” said Fr. Peter Surdel, SCJ. The provincial superior of the South African Province, Fr. Peter has a special fondness for St.



Frs. Joshua and Ntsikelelo with some of St. Teresa's youth. Human trafficking and smuggling is an incredible problem. 187 young people from St. Teresa Mission were a part of larger youth gathering working to bring to light the issue in the wake of the World Cup. Here some of the young people hold up the posters that encourage teens not to fall prey to traffickers.

Teresa Mission. As a young missionary he spent several years there in ministry and remembers a time in the not-too-distant past when there were no paved roads or electricity in the area. For him personally, and for the province, it was a difficult decision to leave St. Teresa. But there simply were not the personnel to staff the parish. It's a familiar story heard in many parts of the world, not just in South Africa's rural countryside.

Frs. Ntsikelelo and Joshua —

South Africans who grew up in towns near St. Teresa — were the first priests to be ordained for the South African Province since 2002.

When Fr. Peter said that “God is very good to us,” he was not only grateful for the two new SCJ priests, but SCJ priests whose language skills were a perfect match for St. Teresa. Half of the people of the parish speak Sesotho and half speak Xhosa. “Coincidentally, one of our new priests speaks Sesotho and



Fr. Peter Surdel, provincial superior, teases Fr. Ntsikelelo about his South African soccer jersey a week before the World Cup.



Children lead the way during an outdoor Corpus Christi procession at St Teresa Mission.

one speaks Xhosa," said Fr. Peter. "It is Providence."

With Frs. Ntsikelelo and Joshua, the Priests of the Sacred Heart returned to one of the community's first ministries in South Africa, for it was near St. Teresa's that the SCJs established their first mission in the country.

Pope Pius XI asked Fr. Leo John Dehon, SCJ founder, to send missionaries to South Africa. In 1923, four members of the German Province arrived in Aliwal North (now the location of the South African provincialate).

Today, sitting in a church with pews filled from end to end, it is hard to imagine that when the SCJs first came to Herschel District that Catholicism was generally unknown among the local people. The Dutch Reformed and Anglican Churches introduced Christianity to the area but it was not until the SCJs arrived that Catholic Church had a presence in the district.

Apartheid wouldn't be institutionalized in South Africa until 1948, but even in the 1920s civil laws made it difficult for European missionaries to have a presence in a predominantly black area. Land could only be purchased for business reasons.

After several years the SCJ missionaries finally got a foothold in the area when a "colored" (the South African term for people of mixed race) man decided to sell one of his businesses in the area because it had been plagued by floods. Knowing that the SCJs wanted to acquire property he offered to sell it to them, though at a price far higher than the flood-prone property was worth.

Even though the cost was inflated, the SCJs jumped at the opportunity.

A check was written and the businessman looked at it for a few minutes. He then he tore it up and declared that the four-acre plot of land would be his gift to the Church.

Providence is often present at St. Teresa.

The "Mission Among the Ruins" as it was known, started in 1927 with two SCJs based in a tent pitched between a shed and a few other dilapidated out-buildings. Weather permitting, Mass

was celebrated in the open air.

From that "Mission Among the Ruins" came St. Teresa Mission, which now includes a school that serves 1,300 students and a clinic staffed by the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa. There are also several outstations, as well as dozens of small Christian communities.

Besides Frs. Ntsikelelo and Joshua, many others are vital in keeping the dreams of those early SCJ missionaries alive. Fr. Anthony Austin, SCJ, one of the first South Africans to join the Priests of the Sacred Heart, came out of retirement to mentor the new priests.

And then there is Cecilia McKenzie, a long-time pastoral minister and constant presence at the parish.

The youth in particular know her and respect her. All it takes is a quick glance from McKenzie to refocus a couple of teens horsing around in the back of church. Young people with questions, young people in trouble and young people simply with a desire to participate in their church come to "Mama Cecilia" as she is called; "Mama Cecilia" being the South African equivalent to "Miss Cecilia" in the American South.

The energy found in a feast-day liturgy is contagious. The enthusiasm and sense of welcoming at St. Teresa is more than obvious. But there is also much challenge. Located in a small township about a 45-minute drive from Aliwal North, most of those who worship at the church are poor. There is always concern for local youth and how their lives can be better. Worried that young people in the area would fall prey to human trafficking during the World Cup, parish leaders took 187



View more photos from
South Africa at:
www.scjusa.smugmug.com

There are three South African albums
prior to the Election Assembly photos.

young people from St. Teresa's to join in a larger youth gathering to learn how to avoid becoming another statistic in the human trafficking tragedy.

Jobs are scarce, and the problems frequently found alongside poverty are prevalent.

Yet amidst the challenge, there is still an incredible sense of community, of welcoming and hospitality; a sense that Providence is very present at St. Teresa Mission.

The U.S. Province has long had a special relationship with the South African Province since it was one of the two "mother provinces" of the entity (the other being the German Province). Many Americans have served in South Africa, including Fr. John Strittmatter, SCJ, who continues there, as well as Bishop Joe Potocnak, SCJ. The bishop, now in retirement, is currently filling in for vacationing SCJs.

Other SCJs with ties to the United States include many alumni of the ESL program at Sacred Heart School of Theology. Fr. Sandro Capoferri, SCJ, a member of the formation team in Pietermaritzburg, is an alumnus, as well as the newly appointed bishop of De Aar, Bishop Adam Musialek, SCJ.

In future issues of the *SCJ News*, and on our website (www.sacredheartusa.org), we will share more stories about South Africa.

To view photos taken at several SCJ locations in South Africa earlier this summer, including the celebration of Corpus Christi at St. Teresa Mission, please go to the province photo site at: www.scjusa.smugmug.com and click on the appropriate galleries.



Fr. Joshua speaks to the people.

SCJ NEWS

Novitiate attacked

Just as we were getting ready to send this issue of the *SCJ News* to the printer we learned that the novitiate for the Congolese Province had been attacked. The novitiate is in Kiragho, about 10 miles from Butembo (North Kivu). The well-armed bandits tortured Fr. Osnildo Klann, SCJ, novice master, and injured several novices. They tore through the house, taking clothes, phones and anything else that they could carry. Much of what they couldn't carry they destroyed.

The attack took place one month after another by these same bandits on an SCJ parish near the novitiate. With rumors of future attacks, the province was looking at the possibility of abandoning the novitiate house.

More details are on the province website: www.sacredheartusa.org.

100 years in North America

The Canadian Region hosted a celebration on Feast of the Sacred Heart to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the SCJ presence in North America. Archbishop Terrence Prendergast of Ottawa was the main presider at a special liturgy held at Resurrection Parish (Fr. Paul Tennyson, SCJ, is pastor). Other guests included Fr. John van den Hengel, SCJ, general councilor and Fr. Tom Cassidy, SCJ, provincial superior of the U.S. Province.

Three French SCJs, along with a diocesan priest, began ministry in 1910 in Wainwright, a small village near the Saskatchewan border.

These first SCJs who came to North America ministered primarily to French-speaking Catholics. As the face of western Canada changed, ministry to the French-speaking diminished. In 1940, the SCJ presence in western Canada ended and the congregation's focus in Canada moved to Ontario and Quebec.

However, while ministry in Alberta came to an end, ministry in North America as a whole was growing. In 1919, shortly after the first North American novitiate was established in Canada, the first SCJ arrived in the United States. Fr. Matthias Fohrman, SCJ, came on a fund-raising mission for the German Province. On Palm Sunday, 1923, Fr. Fohrman celebrated Mass at St. Mary Church in

Lower Brule, and began the congregation's ministry in the United States.

More information about the anniversary is on the province website (www.sacredheartusa.org). To access stories on the site, click on the "News" tab at the top of the page. An archives of previous news stories, as well as back issues of the *Fridge Notes*, is available in the right column below "Upcoming Events."

Please remember...

Fr. Paul Vernooy, SCJ, a member of the Canadian Region, died July 30 in Toronto. Fr. Paul was 70 and had suffered from Parkinson's Disease for the past 20 years.

Fr. Paul served as associate pastor in the Ontario parishes of St. George in Ottawa, Sacred Heart in Uxbridge, St. Joan of Arc in Toronto, as well as Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (now St. Martin of Tours) in Franklin, Wis. He was pastor of St. Mary's parish in Hagersville (Ontario) with its mission church of St. Ann in Walpole.

Also, we remember *Diane Smits*, former administrative assistant at the province vocation office, who died July 19 of cancer; she was 64. For many years Diane did a yeoman's job with the mailing of the *SCJ News*. Our condolences to her family, especially her husband Bob.

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Priests of the Sacred Heart
P.O. Box 289
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