



JESUITS

Central and Southern

Fall 2023



ENCOUNTERING GOD IN CREATION

200 Years of Service | Nontraditional Novice Experiments | Remembering Harry Tompson, SJ



Dear Friends in the Lord,
Peace of Christ!

Apostolic planning is vital for the Society of Jesus, and each province has been asked to engage in a comprehensive planning process that discerns where and how to

live out our mission in the years to come. These *future-oriented* processes force us to recognize our limitations, yet also consider our potential and the possibilities for the years ahead. There is less emphasis on apostolic reviewing or *past-oriented* processes that allow us to look back at the road we have traveled. Perhaps there are painful memories we wish to avoid, but it seems to me that apostolic reviewing can be as important as apostolic planning for giving us a sense of hope and zeal for what we might accomplish in the years ahead.

When asked about the diminishing number of Jesuits in the world, former Superior General Fr. Adolfo Nicolas would remind his audience that he had many more Jesuits than St. Ignatius; therefore, how could he not feel hopeful?

In this edition, we do some apostolic reviewing; we look back at important moments in the history of the province as we revisit the arrival of the Jesuits to St. Louis two hundred years ago. We also reconnect with our history by taking a brief glance at the social ministries founded by Fr. Harry Tompson.

I hope that you will find these articles as consoling as I did as I reflected on how many lives have been affected by a small group of Jesuits arriving on the banks of the Mississippi River in St. Louis, or a single Jesuit laboring for the salvation of souls in the City of New Orleans. St. Paul's words in the Letter to the Ephesians come to mind, "all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas P. Greene, SJ". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thomas P. Greene, SJ
Provincial

Amigos,
¡La Paz del Señor!

La planificación apostólica es vital para la Compañía de Jesús, y se ha pedido a cada provincia que se comprometa en un proceso de planificación global que discierna dónde y cómo vivir nuestra misión en los años venideros. Estos procesos *orientados al futuro* nos obligan a reconocer nuestras limitaciones, pero también a considerar nuestro potencial y las posibilidades para los próximos años. Hay menos énfasis en la revisión apostólica o en los procesos *orientados al pasado* que nos permiten mirar hacia atrás y ver el camino que hemos recorrido. Tal vez haya recuerdos dolorosos que deseemos evitar, pero me parece que la revisión apostólica puede ser tan importante como la planificación apostólica para darnos un sentido de esperanza y entusiasmo por lo que podamos lograr en los años que vienen.

Cuando se le preguntaba por la disminución del número de jesuitas en el mundo, el antiguo Superior General, P. Adolfo Nicolás, recordaba a su auditorio que él tenía muchos más jesuitas que San Ignacio; por tanto, ¿cómo no sentirse esperanzado?

En esta edición, hacemos un repaso apostólico; echamos una mirada al pasado, a momentos importantes de la historia de la provincia al volver sobre la llegada de los jesuitas a San Luis hace doscientos años. También volvemos a conectar con nuestra historia echando un breve vistazo a los ministerios sociales fundados por el P. Harry Tompson.

Espero que encuentren estos artículos tan estimulantes como yo los encontré al reflexionar sobre cuántas vidas se han visto impactadas por la llegada de un pequeño grupo de jesuitas a las orillas del río Mississippi en San Luis, o de un solo jesuita trabajando por la salvación de las almas en la ciudad de Nueva Orleans. Me vienen a la mente las palabras de San Pablo en la Carta a los Efesios: "Toda la gloria a Dios, que es capaz, por su gran poder que actúa en nosotros, de realizar infinitamente más de lo que podemos pedir o pensar."

En Cristo,

Thomas P. Greene, SJ
Provincial



**Jesuits Central and Southern
Volume X • Number 3
Fall 2023**

Jesuits is published three times each year to highlight the mission and ministries of the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province.

Editorial Team

Therese Fink Meyerhoff, Editor
Tracy Gramm, Graphic Designer
Ignatius Plato, Contributor

Advancement Team

Paula K. Parrish, CFRE
Chief Advancement Officer
UCSAdvancement@Jesuits.org

Fr. J.P. Hough, SJ
Executive Director of Advancement
jphough@jesuits.org

Rosalie Tomeny
Major Gifts Officer
rtomeny@jesuits.org

Contact Us

For comments or questions about magazine content, contact the editor at UCSCommunication@Jesuits.org.

To update your mailing preferences, visit www.jesuitscentralsouthern.org/no-magazine/ or email UCSAdvancement@Jesuits.org.

Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province
4511 West Pine Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63108-2191
314-361-7765
jesuitscentralsouthern.org

Cover: Jesuits and discerners hike in the wilderness of Wyoming during a retreat this summer.



2 | Province News

4 | 200 Years of Jesuit Mission in St. Louis and Beyond

6 | Sacred Encounters:
Following in the Footsteps of Fr. Peter De Smet

10 | In the Wilderness with God

12 | On the Frontiers of Service:
Creative Novice Experiences for Growth

18 | Fr. Harry Tompson, SJ:
A Legacy of Compassion

20 | A Place in the Classroom:
Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

22 | Mary Jolley:
Companion in Mission

24 | Man in Formation
Philip Nahlik, SJ

25 | Man at Work
Fr. Anthony Borrow, SJ

26 | From the OIS:
Por Cristo

28 | In Memoriam

Novitiate Relocates Temporarily to California

With the approval of Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, the Novitiate of St. Stanislaus Kostka was moved this August from Grand Coteau, Louisiana, to Culver City, California. Father Provincial Thomas P. Greene, SJ, and the other provincials of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States are discerning the future locations for novitiates across the Conference as the Society of Jesus explores how best to form men to respond generously to the needs of the Church and world into the future.

The move to Culver City brings novices of the USA Central and Southern (UCS) Province together with those of the Jesuits USA West Province, making a community of 20 total novices who pray, share classes and engage in apostolic works together. The novitiate remains a community of the UCS Province, under the guidance of Novice Director Fr. Drew Kirschman, SJ.

Province Turns Parishes over to Diocesan Administration

In accord with the province apostolic plan, the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province this summer turned over two parishes to their respective archdioceses. St. Ignatius of Loyola in Denver and St. Matthew the Apostle in St. Louis are no longer Jesuit parishes.

In the case of St. Ignatius, the decision was made to leave the parish after a long discernment process in response to the declining number of Jesuits. The departure was effective July 1, 2023.

The change at St. Matthew's is the result of the Archdiocese of St. Louis' "All Things New" initiative. Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski has determined St. Matthew's will combine with other parishes in the area. That decision is currently under appeal to the Vatican, but since Aug. 1, 2023, the Jesuits are no longer pastorally responsible for the parish.

The Jesuits of the province are grateful for the opportunity to minister with these two fine faith communities for many years.

Faithful Companions:

Wisdom

from Senior Jesuits



JESUITS



SCAN
TO WATCH

Watch a video production by Fr. Jeremy Zipple, SJ, that highlights spiritual insights from some of the senior members of the province at bit.ly/faithful-companions.

UPCOMING EVENTS



ST. IGNATIUS HALL DEDICATION AND BLESSING

Sunday, Nov. 12, 2023

DAY OF REFLECTION

(bit.ly/DaysOfReflection2023)

HOUSTON

Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2024

Holy Name Passionist Retreat Center

DALLAS

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Monserat Jesuit Retreat House, Lake Dallas

ST. LOUIS

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

White House Jesuit Retreat

CONVENT, LOUISIANA

Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

Manresa House of Retreats

JUBILEE CELEBRATION NEW ORLEANS

Sunday, Dec. 3, 2023

TOUR OF ITALY

with Fr. J.P. Hough, SJ

March 4-16, 2024

bit.ly/ucs-italy-trip-2024

For more information about any of these events, visit the URL listed with the event or contact Ana Duran, special events coordinator at, aduran@jesuits.org or Pat Rubenstein, executive assistant, at ucsadvancementadmin@jesuits.org.

Final Vows

- Father Luis Jimenez Rodriguez, SJ, pronounced final vows at *Parroquia San Ignacio* in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on June 24, 2023.
- Father Sylvester Tan, SJ, pronounced final vows at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, on Aug. 12, 2023.
- Father Michael Rozier, SJ, pronounced final vows at St. Francis Xavier College Church in St. Louis on Aug. 24, 2023.

Most Rev. Thomas P. Greene, SJ, received the three above-mentioned Jesuits' vows on behalf of the Society of Jesus.

- Father Brian M. Reedy, SJ, pronounced final vows in Sacred Heart Chapel at Loyola Marymount University on Sept. 10, 2023.

Father Edward J. Siebert, SJ, received his vows on behalf of the Society.



Father Luis Jimenez Rodriguez, SJ



Father Sylvester Tan, SJ



Father Michael Rozier, SJ



Father Brian M. Reedy, SJ

First Vows

Jesuits Matthew Brazzolotto, Joseph Laughlin, José López, Carlos Martínez-Vela, Scott McKillip, Christopher Ross and Paolo Taffaro pronounced the perpetual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, on Aug. 12, 2023. All seven have now begun first studies at various Jesuit universities.



Left to right: Matthew Brazzolotto, José López, Scott McKillip, Carlos Martínez-Vela, Joseph Laughlin, Paolo Taffaro and Christopher Ross

Marking 200 Years of Jesuit Mission in St. Louis and Beyond

In celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Jesuits' arrival in St. Louis in 1823, historian Ellen Skerrett has uncovered stories of "Ours," some that have been forgotten, others never known. The Missouri Jesuits' encounter with American life is a transnational adventure story. Thousands of Jesuit priests and brothers devoted their lives to building up this extraordinary mission. The following paragraphs are excerpts from Ms. Skerrett's excellent history. You may download the complete history as a PDF on the province website at bit.ly/missouri-province-legacy.

When the first members of the Missouri Mission arrived in St. Louis on May 31, 1823, they may have wondered how they could live up to the terms of an agreement made by Fr. Charles Neale, SJ, superior of the Jesuits in the United States. The historic document authored by Bishop Benedict Fenwick of New Orleans on March 19, 1823, entrusted the Jesuits with "absolute and exclusive care" of white residents as well as "various Indian tribes ... together with all the churches, chapels, colleges and seminaries of learning" that Jesuits would erect in the years to come.

The ground for St. Stanislaus Seminary was broken on the Feast of St. Ignatius, July 31, 1823. The resulting log structure came to be regarded as the "cradle of the Province," a modest beginning for

what would become "the longest continually operated Jesuit novitiate in the United States."

Missouri Jesuits early on recognized that parish missions and pastoral work reached more "Americans and the Irish" than their underfunded and understaffed schools. It was a painful admission. St. Regis Seminary for Indian boys in Florissant had opened in 1824 with the understanding that the United States government would contribute \$800 yearly, if the enterprise had at least six students. Enrollment never grew enough to sustain the school, and it closed in 1831.

Disappointed but not discouraged, the Jesuits learned valuable lessons from this failure as they began their work in 1847 among the Osage in what is now St. Paul, Kansas. Father

Our Founders

Fr. Charles Felix Van Quickenborne, SJ,
superior and master of novices

Fr. Peter Joseph Timmermans, SJ
Francis De Maillet, nSJ
Br. Peter De Meyer, SJ
Peter John De Smet, nSJ
John Anthony Elet, nSJ
Br. Henry Reiselman, SJ
John Baptist Smedts, nSJ
Br. Charles Strahan, SJ
Judocus Van Assche, nSJ
Peter John Verhaegen, nSJ
Felix Livinus Verreydt, nSJ

❖

Three enslaved couples whose labor, though not freely given, contributed significantly to the establishment of the mission:

Thomas and Mary Brown
Isaac and Susan Hawkins
Moses and Nancy Queen

John Schoenmakers, SJ (1807-1883), and Fr. Paul M. Ponziglioni, SJ (1818-1900), created documents in the Osage language, treasures now highly prized by the Osage Nation, as they constitute some of the only Osage language documents in existence today. It is no coincidence that "Sho-minka" became the Osage word for priest.

Whether in small rural towns or urban centers, Jesuit-preached parish missions drew large crowds and public notice. This was "excitement of the right kind" – spectacles that combined preaching with devotion. Newspapers spilled columns of ink recreating the scene for their readers, often tallying up the numbers of confessions heard and communions received. Francis X. Weninger, SJ





(1805-1888), became well known on the mission circuit, with one of his earliest missions – in Hermann, Missouri – concluding with a military band accompanying men and women singing the *Te Deum* as a “magnificent” 30-foot cross was raised.

Father Arnold Damen, SJ (1815-1890), forged a different path, using his consummate skills as a preacher to direct attention – and funding – for his efforts in Chicago. His appointment to establish a Jesuit foundation in Chicago came on the heels of a successful mission in 1856 that drew upwards of 12,000 people. The Diocese of Chicago was heavily in debt, and its immigrant population sorely needed Catholic schools, churches, a hospital, asylums and a cemetery. All Chicago Bishop Anthony O’Regan could offer the Missouri Jesuits was “spiritual wealth.”

In what became the stuff of legend, Fr. Damen rejected the bishop’s offer of a parish and the small university of St. Mary of the Lake on the North Side. Instead, he purchased property on the West Side among working-class Irish and German families, confident that “here we will have a large Catholic population at once, sufficient to fill a large church.” He raised funds for a monumental Gothic edifice and opened free schools for girls and boys.

Holy Family Church became a powerful symbol of faith in the future of Chicago when it was dedicated in elaborate ceremonies on Aug. 26, 1860. By 1895, it had a congregation of more than 20,000 and more than 5,000 students enrolled from grammar school through college.



Other innovations followed, including a mission to Belize, the 1887 Course of Studies for higher education, an observatory at Saint Louis University, ministries to Black Catholics, creative approaches to evangelism and more. Then, as most readers know, in 2014, the Missouri Province joined with the New Orleans Province to create the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province. Today’s Jesuits stand on the shoulders of the Jesuits who came before them. Like their forebears, Jesuits of the USA Central and Southern Province respond to the needs of their time, in schools, parishes, retreat centers and social ministries.



We are grateful to Ellen Skerrett for this look at some of the giants of the Missouri Province. We could not include every Jesuit or every ministry. There is certainly more to this story, much of which can be found at the Jesuit Archives & Research Center in St. Louis. You are invited to visit.

Father Jeremy Zipple, SJ, has produced an excellent video history of the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province, including not only the Missouri Province history, but that of the New Orleans Province, Belize and Puerto Rico. View it at:





SACRED ENCOUNTERS:

Following in the Footsteps of a *Trailblazing Jesuit*

By Therese Fink Meyerhoff
and Tracey Primrose

Henry Nolf grew up in Belgium hearing stories of Fr. Peter J. De Smet. Father De Smet was a renowned Jesuit missionary whose impact is still felt a century and a half after his death, but Henry's stories don't come from history books; they were family lore. Father De Smet is Henry's four-times great uncle.

Father De Smet was born in Flanders, now Belgium, on Jan. 30, 1801. With the express intent of

becoming a missionary, he immigrated to the United States at the age of 19 and entered the Jesuit novitiate in Maryland. He was among the seven Jesuit novices who accompanied two priests, three brothers and six enslaved people to establish the Missouri Mission in St. Louis, arriving May 31, 1823 — 200 years ago this past spring. He died May 23, 1873.

During the 50 years between his arrival in St. Louis and his death,

Fr. De Smet traveled extensively throughout the American West, founding missions among Indigenous peoples. He gained a reputation as a peacemaker between conflicting tribes, while seeking to protect the rights of the Indigenous peoples in the face of increasing land demands of settlers. When he was not journeying as a missionary, he was serving at St. Louis College, the Jesuit-run school that became Saint Louis University in 1832.

Between 1833 and 1872, he traveled across the Atlantic numerous times, recruiting both Jesuits and donations to support his missions and Jesuit colleges from Ohio to the Pacific.

Despite this peripatetic life, Fr. De Smet managed to stay in touch with his family in Belgium. His many visits to Europe allowed him to attend and preside at family sacraments. The family has saved mementos such as crucifixes from their famous relative and has passed on his memory from generation to generation.

“From the day we were born, we heard about him,” Henry said. “He is a prominent figure in the family, and my parents and my grandparents told a lot of stories about him. So, my cousins and I always wanted to make this trip to understand a little bit about what he has done.”

“This trip” Henry and his cousins wanted to make was to the United States, a pilgrimage of sorts timed to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Fr. De Smet’s death. Henry and his wife, Claude, would visit St. Louis — Fr. De Smet’s home base — before linking up with additional family members in Montana and Idaho.

Henry reached out to De Smet Jesuit High School in St. Louis County about a year before his planned trip, and the high school connected Henry with Dr. David Miros at the Jesuit Archives & Research Center (JARC). Dr. Miros helped to craft an all-things-De Smet itinerary for the Nolf’s. He even recruited a stellar escort, Fr. Frank Reale, SJ, former provincial of the Missouri Province who supports the work of the JARC.

First on the itinerary: Sunday Mass with Fr. Reale at the Shrine of St. Joseph in downtown St. Louis. Established by the Jesuits and dedicated in 1846, the church is an historic landmark, recognized by the Vatican as the site of one

of the two miracles required for the canonization of Jesuit Peter Claver. Father De Smet is known to have celebrated Mass at St. Joseph’s, including presiding at the dedication of the expanded Romanesque structure in 1866.

Following lunch, Fr. Reale and Dr. Miros brought the Nolf’s to the Saint Louis University Museum of Art, where Fr. David Suwalsky, SJ, gave them a personal tour. Father Suwalsky, now the vice president for mission and identity at Saint Louis University, in 2003 oversaw the design of the museum, which includes a substantial section devoted to Fr. De Smet. He showed off memorabilia ranging from two priceless globes that Fr. De Smet acquired during one of his European trips to his original headstone.

The next day, Henry and Claude visited De Smet Jesuit High School, where President Fr. Ronald O’Dwyer, SJ, presided at a Mass of Remembrance for the school’s namesake, with Fr. Reale and Fr. James Burshek, SJ, concelebrating. Father O’Dwyer presented Henry with framed floorboards from the Old St. Ferdinand Shrine in Florissant, Missouri, where Fr. De Smet lay prostrate when he was ordained a priest Sept. 23, 1827.

After touring the high school, Henry and Claude were escorted to Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis, to which Fr. De Smet’s remains were transferred in 2003. He is buried there in the Jesuit plot, along with his earliest companions and nearly 800 other Jesuits.



Archivist David Miros relates Jesuit history to Claude and Henry Nolf while Fr. Frank Reale, SJ, looks on.



Father David Suwalsky, SJ, shows Henry Nolf the headstone of his four-times great uncle, Fr. Peter De Smet.



Jesuit Fathers James Burshek, Ronald O’Dwyer and Frank Reale concelebrated a Mass of Remembrance for Fr. De Smet.



Fr. Frank Reale, SJ, was provincial when the remains of Fr. Peter De Smet were moved to Calvary Cemetery. He escorted Henry and Claude Nolf during their visit to St. Louis on the 150th anniversary of Fr. De Smet's death.

Henry said he found the visit to the cemetery particularly emotional. “Frank Reale told me he attended the exhumation of Pierre-Jean’s remains,” Henry said. At the time, Fr. Reale was provincial, and he oversaw the transfer himself. Henry found great consolation in the opportunity to speak to him about the process. “He spoke in very simple terms; it was a strong moment.”

Henry and Claude later visited the Old St. Ferdinand Shrine, where they were able to see additional memorabilia and a room where Fr. De Smet stayed. Their final stop was at the JARC, where they viewed maps of the West that Fr. De Smet drew during his travels. As a gesture of appreciation, the Nolfs donated to the collection a letter, “Village de St. Ignace, Kalispels, 13 Mars 1845 (Oregon),” which provides a new glimpse of Fr. De Smet, the Society of Jesus and the Church of his time.

And then, just as Fr. De Smet had done, his family headed West.

Against the backdrop of the breathtaking Bitterroot and Sapphire Mountains stands historic St. Mary’s Mission in Stevensville, Montana, the

first Western stop on the De Smet family’s itinerary. Henry and Claude were joined by four other family members for a tour of the state’s first church, established in 1841 by Fr. De Smet and his companions.

St. Mary’s history actually began in 1831, when a delegation of Bitterroot Salish and neighboring Nez Perce tribes set out on a 1,600-mile journey from present-day Montana to St. Louis. They had heard about the “Great Mass” from Iroquois who had converted to Catholicism and were determined to find the men they called “Black Robes” and bring them back to their people. Three times their mission failed because members of the expedition fell ill or were massacred while passing through rival territory. In 1839, on the fourth try, the Salish found their Black Robe, Fr. De Smet. On May 24, 2023, 182 years after Fr. De Smet first came

to this wild and rugged landscape, six family members stood before St. Mary’s sun-dappled white clap-board mission church to learn more about their ancestor’s life among Indigenous people.

The family members toured the mission’s museum and grounds, including the well-tended country cemetery, a final resting place for both Jesuits and Indigenous people. The family entered the beautifully preserved historic church, which from its earliest days has seamlessly blended Christian and Indigenous traditions and images. Bishop Austin Vetter of the Diocese of Helena presided over a moving liturgy, while a Salish drummer plaintively sang traditional hymns. After Mass, the De Smets presented a gift to the historic mission: a crucifix that had been given by Fr. De Smet to his nephew François in 1866 on the young man’s wedding day. It was the first direct De Smet artifact the museum had ever received, and museum director Dora Bradt was emotional as she



St. Mary's Mission Church, established by Fr. Peter De Smet and his companions, is the oldest church in Montana.

asked Bishop Vetter to bless the cherished family heirloom.

On day two of their Western leg, the relatives headed to St. Ignatius Mission, founded in 1854 by Fr. De Smet and fellow Jesuits to serve the Salish and Kootenai people. Father Victor Cancino, SJ, the associate pastor at St. Ignatius, was proud to show the family around as he traced the mission's history from one small log cabin to a burgeoning compound with a school, sawmill, printing press, flour mill and hospital. Today, most of those buildings are gone, but what remains at St. Ignatius is what has always mattered most: the mission church.

When planning the family's trip, Henry said they hoped for two things: to walk in the footsteps of their ancestor and to grow in understanding of Indigenous peoples. Dr. Ryan Booth, a history professor at Washington State University and a member of the Upper Skagit tribe, helped fulfill this latter wish as he joined the family for the tour of St Ignatius. Dr. Booth has spent

the last several years researching a complex chapter in Jesuit history: For decades, Jesuits and other religious orders contracted with the federal government to run boarding schools for Indigenous students. The schools often had the effect of stripping Indigenous people of their cultural identity by a process of assimilation and indoctrination.

It took the De Smet family about two hours to drive from St. Ignatius Mission in Montana to the Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission State Park in Cataldo, Idaho, a journey that would have taken Fr. De Smet nearly four days by horse. Arriving there in 1842, Fr. De Smet wrote that the Coeur d'Alene people were hospitable to Christianity and that he had baptized many members of the tribe during his visit.

Within a decade, Jesuits and Indigenous people were putting the finishing touches on an impressive mission church, which is today the oldest building in the state of Idaho.

In the late 1870s, the Catholic mission was moved to what is today De Smet, Idaho, where the original mission complex is a state park and visitor center boasting an outstanding permanent exhibit, *Sacred Encounters: Father De Smet & the Indians of the Rocky Mountain West*. Father Peter Byrne, SJ, pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission, accompanied the family members as they toured the exhibit, which contains important Jesuit and Indigenous artifacts.

By the time of Fr. De Smet's death in 1873 at the age of 72, the Native American landscape that he advocated for was already in jeopardy and moving toward extinction. Indigenous tribes had been forced to sign treaties ceding their lands to the federal government. Father De Smet, who wanted to protect the Indigenous peoples and their cultures, had himself become convinced that peace treaties were the only way the tribes could survive.

Henry Nolf says that being able to walk in Fr. De Smet's footsteps provided the family with its own sacred encounter and that he was humbled to see how much of his uncle's legacy has been preserved.

"Two hundred years ago, it was a kind of a multinational company," Henry said, referring to the Society of Jesus. "Father De Smet was a kind of business developer. His job was to establish missions, and he was surrounded by other very capable Jesuits, who ran them while he moved on to the next one. It's really astonishing when you look back."

Perhaps the family's days in the United States deepened their appreciation for their famous uncle, whom we remember and celebrate as an esteemed Black Robe.



The Nolf's are joined by Henry's cousins and the concelebrants of the Mass at St. Mary's Mission: left to right: Fr. Chris Weekly, SJ, Bishop Austin Vetter of the Diocese of Helena, Fr. Craig Hightower, SJ, and Fr. David Severson.

For the past three summers, the vocations team has invited several discerners and a few Jesuits to a Wilderness Discernment Retreat in Wyoming. The experience was planned and led in collaboration with COR Expeditions, whose mission is to “provide transformative wilderness experiences that renew the hearts of participants.”

William Manaker, SJ, shares his remembrances of this challenging and beautiful time.

In the **WILDERNESS** *with God*

As an introduction, let me share with you an image of the Wilderness Retreat as I experienced it.

It was the sixth day of the retreat. The day before, we had set up camp near a small mountain lake, as we usually did, but this morning, instead of packing up and hitting the trail, we stayed put. It was a day of silence and prayer.

I looked down on my watch. It was time for my turn, so I grabbed my prayer book and walked the 60 meters from our cook site to the large weather-beaten rock that jutted out into the dark blue water of the lake. There,

at the end of the rock, we had built an altar from loose stones, and upon the altar was a linen corporal and a small monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament.

As I approached the altar, I knelt in adoration on the rock. Shortly after, the retreatant whose shift had just ended got up and walked quietly away. I was alone with the Lord.

There on the rock, I was in a magnificent cathedral. The ridge of trees and rocks surrounding the lake enclosed and secluded the space, forming a wall that stretched into the sky. The silence was complete, broken





Jesuits Fr. Robert Murphy, William Manaker and Fr. Aaron Pidel accompanied discerners into the wilderness where they could discover God in the magnificence of Creation.

only by the occasional rustling of the wind and the gentle hum of mosquitoes. And here before me, sacramentally present on the altar, was the Lord of heaven and earth, the creator of such astounding beauty.

That day on the lake, our silent day, was undoubtedly the most powerful experience of the retreat. But the entire expedition, from the day we entered the wilderness to the day we left, was a true “spiritual exercise” — an activity that prepared and disposed all of those making and guiding the retreat to rid ourselves of disordered attachments and to seek and find God’s will for our lives (cf. SpEx 1).

We were a group of nine men: two guides from COR Expeditions, three Jesuits, and four men discerning a possible Jesuit vocation. Our journey spanned eight days of camping: six full days in the Bridger Wilderness of Wyoming’s Wind River Range, plus a day of camping on

each end to enter and exit the wilderness area. There in the wilderness, no mechanical or motorized vehicles are permitted; if there was trouble, we’d have to get ourselves out on foot.

Each day in the wilderness, apart from the silent day, we hiked for several hours along trails at over 8,000 feet, carrying all our food and supplies in packs that initially weighed more than 40 pounds. Despite the limitations in cookware and supplies, we ate well, making quesadillas, beans and rice, and even homemade pizzas.

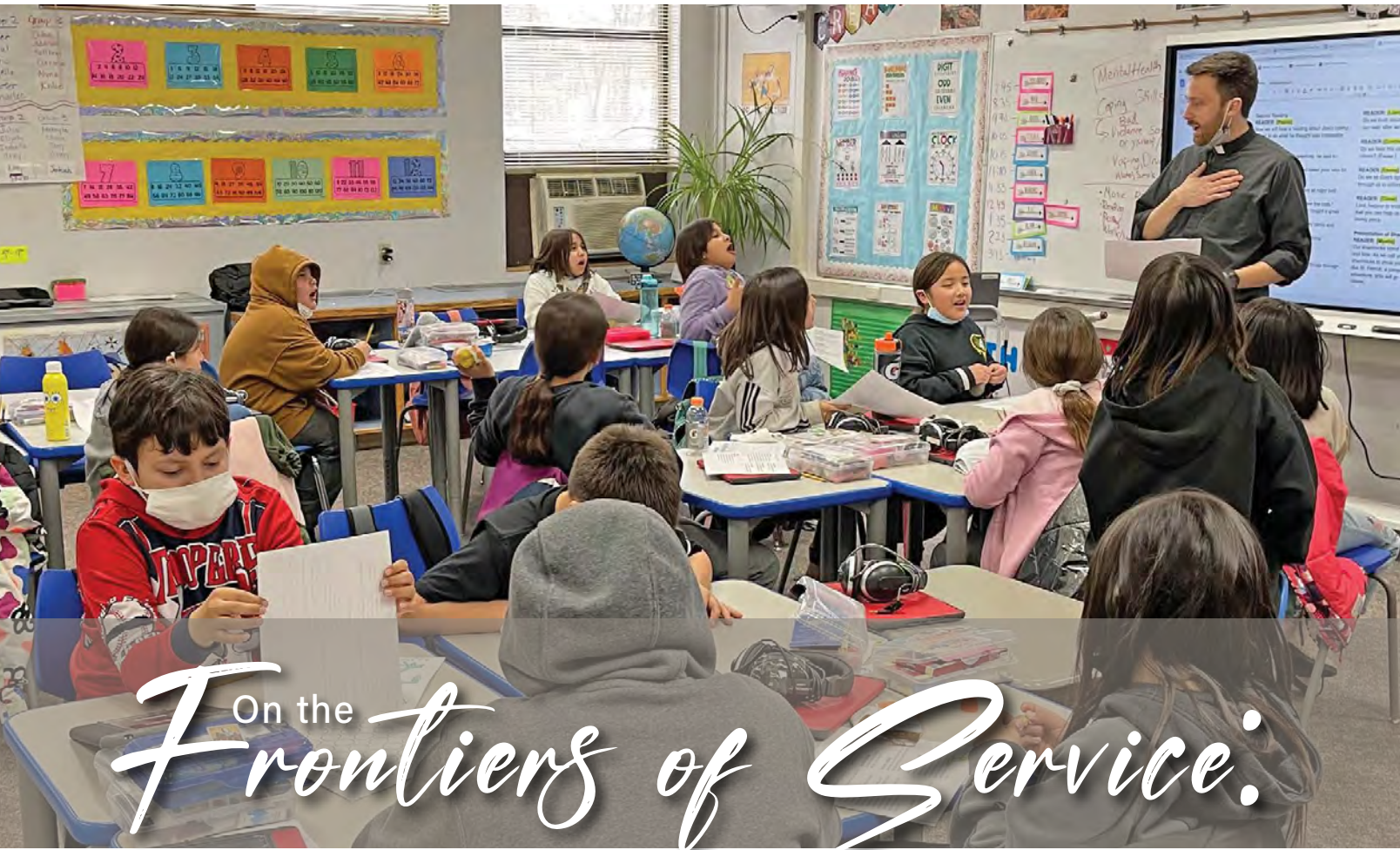
The stunning beauty of the Wind River Range and the majesty and grandeur of the scenery naturally prompted prayer and reflection. The wilderness opens many beautiful pages in the book of creation; there, it is not hard to move from wonder at nature to contemplation of creation’s divine Author.

Time in the wilderness is a time of removal from the world and the cares and the comforts of contemporary life. Much like the early monks of Egypt, the nine of us journeying together were alone with God. Physically separated from others, we were free of the busyness of work and sheltered from the never-ending stream of media through phones and other devices. Though we could not be physically silent the entire retreat, the natural setting and the separation from daily life fostered an interior silence that gave birth to spiritual conversation. Instead of chatting on the trail about sports or the latest news, the setting and the company prompted conversations about prayer, about God, and about vocation. Each day, we celebrated Mass, took time for silent prayer both on the trail and in the camp, and had conferences about the virtues and Ignatian prayer and spirituality.

In addition to a space for prayer and reflection, the wilderness is also a place of testing one’s virtue, as the desert was for Israel. The physical challenge of hiking at altitude with heavy packs was considerable, as was the trial of constant assault by mosquitoes. Furthermore, we were without many of the typical comforts of modern life, sleeping in tents and exposed to the elements. But, as we experienced, this testing gave birth to humility and recognition of one’s need for God’s grace, an important spiritual lesson always worth learning and re-learning.

On the drive back to the airport from our wilderness trek, our group took time to share graces from the experience. Each of us had gained from it: a clearer sense of God’s call, greater freedom, deeper humility, gratitude for the gift of creation and more. The fruit was clear.

I am glad that we can continue to offer such a retreat to others.



On the Frontiers of Service:

CREATIVE NOVICE EXPERIENCES FOR GROWTH

Much of today's Jesuit novitiate formation follows the plan designed by St. Ignatius nearly 500 years ago. Along with studying foundational documents, living in community and ample time for prayer, Jesuit novices have “experiments” – opportunities to test their vocation in apostolic settings. Typical novice experiments include hospital work, teaching and service in shelters or food kitchens.

It is the responsibility of the novitiate staff to work with novices to discern experiments that meet each one's particular needs. In recent years, Novice Director Fr. Drew Kirschman, SJ, has missioned novices of the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province to a wide variety of settings, all with the hope of expanding the horizon of the novice's encounter with Christ in the world.

These placement sites can go well beyond the boundaries of the province with a focus on communities and situations designed to stretch the novice, where they can grow in their relationship with God while learning about themselves and their vocation.

A “long experiment” typically runs 2-5 months.

Scott McKillip, SJ, (above) engages with students on the Pine Ridge Reservation during his long novitiate experiment.

A Language for What Matters Most

By Joseph Laughlin, SJ • Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

“Joe, we’re missioning you to Santo Domingo.”

Father Drew Kirschman informed me that I would spend my long experiment at *Colegio Loyola*, a pre-K through 12th-grade school in the Dominican Republic. I pictured myself writing on a whiteboard and calling on students with raised hands.

Then, I had a Zoom meeting with a Jesuit at the school: “We want you to do Ignatian Spirituality workshops with faculty and staff.”

Oh. That’s not what I was expecting! I went to the novitiate library, snatched seven Ignatian Spirituality books in Spanish, and loaded them all in my little red backpack.

When I got to the New Orleans airport, long security lines put me at risk of missing my flight. My gut clenched as my backpack was pulled aside. I approached the TSA agent. “Please! I’m going to miss my flight! Can you check my bag quickly?”

I was met with a shrug.

“What happens if I leave the bag?” Another shrug.

I jettisoned my backpack and took off, arriving at the gate just as the doors were closing. As my panic subsided, I chose to interpret losing the books as a sign from God about my mission at *Colegio Loyola*. God had not invited me to teach Ignatian Spirituality from the wisdom I could find in the library.

“You’ve been living Ignatian Spirituality,” God seemed to be telling me, “Now go live it in Santo Domingo!”

The only book I had left was my prayer journal from my 30-day *Spiritual Exercises* retreat. My experi-

ence of the *Exercises* was unique to me, which begged the question: Is my particular experience of Ignatian Spirituality even relevant to the school community of Santo Domingo?

The so-called “scandal of particularity” is that God chose to reveal God’s self to a particular people, Israel, in a particular time and place. Moreover, God became human in a particular family, and we call him by the particular name, “Jesus.”

The irony of the scandal of particularity is that it is also universal: God meets each of us through particular people, sacraments, experiences, etc.

While God was asking me to share my particular experience of the *Exercises*, God also invited me to witness the Ignatian charism alive at

Colegio Loyola in its own particular ways. Every other week, students sit on meditation benches as teachers lead them through an Ignatian Contemplation. High school seniors study the *Autobiography of St. Ignatius* and then prepare their own autobiographies to share with each other on a retreat.

The school takes seriously the call to accompany youth in the creation of a hope-filled future by empowering students to recognize and solve their own problems. For instance, the administration noticed that students were leaving trash around the school. Rather than chastise the students, the administration asked every classroom to propose an initiative to help everyone form the habit of properly disposing of trash and recycling.



Joseph Laughlin, SJ, shares Ignatian Spirituality with the school community of *Colegio Loyola* in the Dominican Republic.

Middle schoolers suggested putting reminders on the paper towel dispensers in the bathroom. The kindergarteners decided to walk around with signs and point out stray trash. (I was once confronted by a girl with furrowed brow who pointed out a bottlecap near my feet!)

The students were empowered to see the problem and imagine solutions. The school accompanied them as they used their own creativity to build a future full of hope.

Being in a different culture came with its advantages: I saw the Gospel and the Jesuit charism incarnated in a new way. It turns out I did not need seven books to communicate what I knew of Ignatian Spirituality. My own particular experiences of God met the particular experiences of my colleagues. Despite our different cultures, Ignatian Spirituality gave us a common language to speak about the things that matter most. ■

Finding Moments of Grace

By José López • Dajabon, Dominican Republic

Thanks to Fr. Drew Kirschman, who was always creative about my discernment process, I was able to explore the experience of being a Jesuit in Latin America. My long experiment in Dajabon, Dominican Republic, was one of the most formative experiences of my life.

Dajabon is a remote town in the northern part of the Dominican Republic, on the border with Haiti. I was sent there to assist Fr. Regino Martinez, SJ, at the local parish and radio station. I also generally made myself available to Jesuits when they made service trips inland.

My time in the Dominican Republic was filled with many adventures, too many to list here. I will share just two.

A Trip to Guayubin

One day, Fr. Regino invited me to accompany him to distribute some humanitarian aid he had secured. We

loaded his little pickup truck with supplies and traveled from Dajabon to Guayubin.

Guayubin is a makeshift shanty town, built mainly by Haitian farm laborers. The houses are made from scrap wood with corrugated-metal roofs, and there is an improvised electric grid held together by extension cords you might find at your local hardware store. The homes have no indoor plumbing.

I followed Fr. Regino into a home with a dirt floor, where men of all ages were gathered. I did not realize it beforehand, but I was about to take part in an underground worker's rally.

The workers took turns voicing injustices. Then Fr. Regino told the workers of his solidarity for their movement. He urged the workers to continue recruiting others for their cause.

When the rally finished, we distributed the goods we had brought. Within minutes, there were hundreds of people teeming in the area around the pickup truck. We tried desperately to make sure that the distribution was just. In less than five minutes, all the supplies were gone.

I had never experienced that level of need and poverty.

I recall that day as one of the most enlightening of my long experiment in the Dominican Republic. I was shaken to my core by the poverty I witnessed.

Good Friday with *Campesinos* in the Dominican Countryside

The parish I worked in had a beautiful Holy Week tradition: They invited



José López, SJ, celebrates with high school students following their successful climb of *El Moro*, a mountain in the Dominican Republic.

Jesuits in formation from all over the island to come to the region to help with the liturgies. I was sent to a village called Cayuco, a cattle-ranching community in the countryside. Every day, I walked from house to house, encouraging the people to attend Holy Week services. People would invite me in for coffee and a chat.

The elders of the community recalled for me their memories of the Jesuit missionaries who first came to the village. They told me about one Jesuit who rode his donkey through town and sounded a trumpet to let the people know it was time for Mass.

That Good Friday, there in the countryside, was one of the most memorable days of my life. We did a *Via Crucis* (Way of the Cross) and processed through the village to a Calvary statue in the cemetery. Part of what made the service so special was the devotion of the multi-generational community members who attended the service: kids, teenagers, their parents and grandparents. It was a small service, but everyone contributed, and it was the most profound veneration of the cross I have ever participated in.

All my experiences in the Dominican Republic helped me to see my vocation in a new light, helping me realize the need for Jesuits to fill those spaces of encounter. I am grateful for the creative ways in which our novice director helped us to discern experiments. We never did things for the sake of routine; rather we discerned placements according to the movements of the Spirit.

The experiences I had in the novitiate really helped me to understand my call to service. I now have formative experiences that I can draw from in my ministries to come. ■



A New Worship Experience

Marco Machado, SJ • Chiapas, Mexico

Before arriving in Chiapas, I heard how much Maya mythology influenced the Maya's religious practices. For many, Tsel'tal theology seems syncretistic – a merging of different cultures – because they pray in Tsel'tal (their native language) using their prayers, symbols and rituals.

During my early days in Chiapas, Mexico, I was sent to *Tatic* (Father) Antal's family in Yal'elmsil, a village in the middle of the mountains.

Tatic Antal and his family were very welcoming. He was happy to be hosting a Jesuit, and all the kids, whose happiness and energy was contagious, immediately came to greet me and play with me. Then, *Tatic* Antal invited me to the next day's regional *Ayuno*.

Unsure what it was, and still recovering from a stomach illness, I responded hesitantly: "I am not feeling too well yet."

Then *Tatic* Antal told me that the whole family was going to the *Ayuno*, even his 12-year-old granddaughter, Marisol. I felt the pressure to participate.

"You know what, *Tatic*? I have changed my mind. I want to go."

Once I committed to the *Ayuno*, I learned the whole truth: it lasted 24 hours without food or sleep.

There were about 200 people at the *Ayuno* whose ages ranged from their eighties to children like Marisol. The chapel was bare, with only wooden boards for sitting. There were two altars. The Christian altar included many religious images of Jesus, St. Sebastian (the region's patron), St. Jerome and of course, Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The Altar Maya was on the floor. I immediately saw why many thought of the Maya's faith as a syncretism between mythology and Christianity. The Altar Maya was a circle divided into four sections, each representing a cardinal direction with a colored candle. Each section of the altar included food such as fruits, grains, tortillas, tamales, etc. At the center was a statue of Our Lady.

At 5:00 a.m. sharp, the *Nantic* Principal started the ritual Maya prayer around the Altar Maya, walking and bowing at every step. She blew incense from the *copal* toward the center of the Altar Maya. The red

The Tselal
worldview can
enrich the Gospel,
as cultures have
throughout time.

~ Marco Machado, SJ

candle in the east section was lit and we all turned toward the east and started praying in Tselal, the Mayan language of that region. After a couple of seconds in silence, everyone named their petitions out loud.

“The sun rises in the east, that’s why we pray for illumination,” *Tatic* Antal explained to me. “If we get close to the sun, God will give us His light.”

Then everyone lit a white candle and placed it on the Altar Maya. There were about 200 candles, each representing one of our prayers.

At 7:00 a.m., the *Nantic* Principal lit the black candle, and we turned to the west, asking God to guide us while we walk in darkness. At 9:00 a.m., the *Nantic* Principal lit the white candle, and we all faced north and prayed for cold weather. At 11:00 a.m., the yellow candle was lit; we prayed for wisdom while facing south.

At 1:00 p.m., the blue candle in the center was lit. Facing the Altar Maya, we prayed for the intercession of Our Lady.



Nantic Xel and *Tatic* Antal, Marco Machado's hosts during his stay in a Mayan village.

The time between prayers was used for socializing. Many people introduced themselves to me; they wanted to know the *cashlan* (white person) *Tatic* Antal was hosting.

After a few hours, I started to get anxious; I was not feeling well. So, I walked and prayed the rosary a couple of times. But at about 8:00 p.m., I was done. I was really hungry and very tired. I asked *Tatic* Antal if there was a place where I could get something to eat. He took me to a family who gave me some beans, corn tortillas and coffee (I was not risking plain water again!). They could tell I would not make it through the night and got me a place to sleep.

At about 4:30 a.m., *Tatic* Antal woke me up for the closing ceremony. A cow had been slaughtered, and there was *caldo* to celebrate the end of the *Ayuno*. Everyone was happy to be together, but more than that, they were happy to know that God was in charge of their harvest. I was impressed by the endurance of everyone, especially Marisol.

Although many think the Tselales' beliefs are a mixture of Maya mythology and Christianity, I know this is far from the truth. Maya mythology did not infiltrate into Christianity; Christianity was translated into their language and worldview much like St. Paul did for the Greeks. They are not praying to the mountains and the Maya deities; they are praying to our God in their own way.

Their prayer is so genuine and intense because they know that if their harvest is poor, they will starve. They also know God will not let that happen. They bring their whole past and culture into every prayer, which is what we do in our prayer.

Staying with the Maya taught me what it means to be at the borders; for three months I lived at the edge of western culture. At the same time, I felt as curious about the incarnated God as the Jewish and Greeks must have felt 2000 years ago. This glimpse has been one of the most enriching faith experiences of my life. ■



Scott McKillip, SJ

Lord, Teach Me How to Play

By Scott McKillip, SJ • Pine Ridge Indian Reservation

Late one night, my novice brother and I piled into the car. We took the only road crossing through the vast miles of rolling hills on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. We were in the kind of darkness one knows only beyond the reach of a big city, the kind that makes it nearly impossible to see what's 100 feet ahead. We rounded bend after bend until we reached the top of a hill and pulled over at a scenic lookout, surrounded by nothingness.

We got out and stood amid the silence and gazed upon the night sky. Even though we saw countless stars, we awaited something more. Suddenly we were rewarded: Flashing in the sky was the *aurora borealis*, the northern lights. We stood in awe before the breathtaking phenomenon so rare for this part of North America.

As we stood beneath the beautiful lights, my mind turned to the significance of those lights for the Lakota people. Black Elk, a storied Lakota Catholic catechist, shared the faith with the Lakota; hundreds attributed their becoming Catholic to him. Just before his death in 1950, he told his daughter Lucy, "You will know every-

thing is okay with me by God sending a sign. If something happens in the sky when I die, you'll know I'm okay." On the night of his wake, the day after his death, the same northern lights appeared in the sky, giving hope to Black Elk's family that he was okay.

In my time on the Pine Ridge Reservation, I found myself experiencing these "northern lights" moments, the moments where I found overwhelming beauty, awe and wonder, amid seeming darkness.

One experience began when I got my mission to work with elementary-aged students. I wanted to run the other way. My internal voice said, "I'm not made to lead little kids. I don't know how to do this. Get me out of this. Help!"

I dwelt in my self-made darkness.

Yet, about one week after arriving, something beautiful happened. I went out to help monitor the K-5th grade recess. I found that getting involved with the games was the most effective way to keep recess running smoothly. On most days, I played four square, and this day was no exception. The game began and proceeded with the usual crowd of third- and fourth-grade

boys. Then Skuya, a first grader who had just transferred to Our Lady of Lourdes, joined the line of students waiting to play.

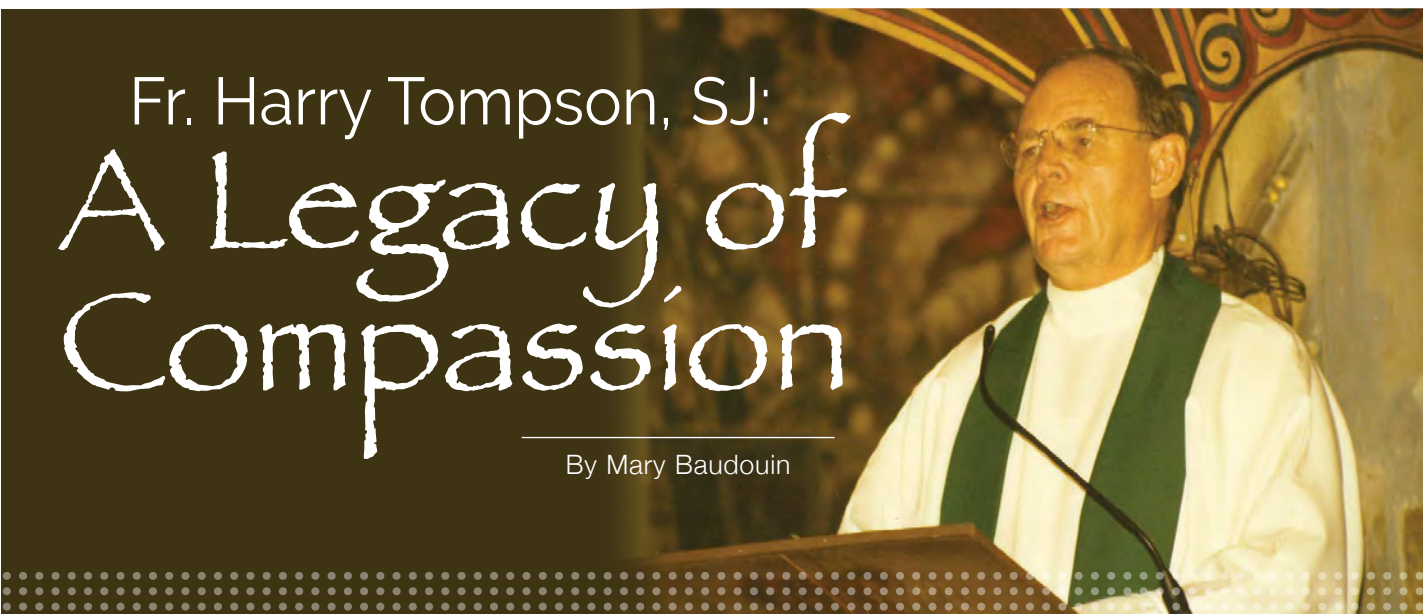
The game began, and the ball was sent straight to Skuya's square. She looked on with her feet planted, innocently unaware of what to do. We called, "Skuya, you're out. You need to get back in the line." She responded with a happy-go-lucky, "OKAY!" and bounced to the back of the line. After waiting her turn, Skuya returned to the first square. Again, she watched as the ball bounced past her. She stood still, excited to see what it meant for her. Again, we told her, "Skuya, you're out. You need to get back in line." She responded again with her energetic, "OKAY!"

It was clear Skuya hadn't the slightest idea how to play four square. But she kept showing up, happy to be there, confident she'd figure things out. Then, something marvelous happened. A fourth-grade boy named Chevy asked me if he could stand in the square with Skuya and teach her how to play. And for the rest of recess, Chevy was devoted to teaching Skuya.

God was revealing another kind of northern lights moment. God taught me that in the darkness of my fears about what to teach, how to teach and how to keep control of an elementary classroom, God's light would come through and teach me. I needed to enter the square (of the Res, the elementary school, the classroom) with courage, even when I felt unprepared. I learned that God was asking me to be like Skuya: to show up with a happy-go-lucky joy and trust that Jesus would enter my square and teach me how to play. ■

Fr. Harry Tompson, SJ: A Legacy of Compassion

By Mary Baudouin



“Son, if you want to know what to do with your life, just go do the thing that helps the most amount of people in the shortest amount of time, and that’s where you’re supposed to be.”

This was the advice Fr. Harry Tompson, SJ, gave to a young Mitch Landrieu, when he sought direction about what he should do with his life. Landrieu went on to serve as lieutenant governor of Louisiana and mayor of New Orleans.

In the last seven years of his life – from 1994 to 2001 – Fr. Tompson must have been exactly where *he* was supposed to be. As pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in downtown New Orleans, he was the catalyst for starting three outreach ministries that still serve marginalized people in the city that he loved: Café Reconcile, Good Shepherd Nativity School and what is now The Harry Tompson Center. No longer ministries of the parish, the three organizations continue to operate as independent nonprofits under the direction of separate boards.

When Fr. Tompson arrived at Immaculate Conception, it was primarily a parish where people fulfilled their Sunday obligation or attended daily Mass during their lunch hour. But, as the current pastor, Fr. Anthony McGinn, SJ, said “Harry revitalized the parish and brought it back to life. He had a great talent for getting people involved and convincing them about how important these ministries were. He got people to move beyond themselves.”

Many of the people that Fr. Tompson recruited into social ministries – parishioners, Jesuit High students, retreatants at Manresa House of Retreats and spiritual directees – are keeping Fr. Tompson’s spirit and vision alive today through these organizations.

Good Shepherd Nativity School Principal Tommy Moran said that Fr. Tompson’s dying wish was for the mission of providing quality education for low-income children to take root. “The challenge of inner-city education is overcome because of Fr Tompson’s vision,” Moran said. “Challenges that others ran away from, he ran to, even though they were costly to address.”

Now in its 23rd year of operation, Good Shepherd Nativity School provides a tuition-free education for more than 260 children in pre-K–7th grade each year. The school opened four months after Fr. Tompson died, birthed by founding board members who shared Fr. Tompson’s vision. They were urged on by one of the final instructions he gave them: “Don’t let this fail.” Their names are engraved on plaques on the Founders Wall in the school with a bust of Fr. Tompson as the centerpiece.

ACCOMPANYING YOUNG PEOPLE IN CREATING A FUTURE OF HOPE

Father Tompson also had great concern for the needs of the youth of New Orleans, who were out of school, out of work and out of hope. In 1996, he joined with Craig Cuccia, a man he was seeing for spiritual direction, and Craig’s brother-in-law Tim to create the Kids Café, a safe space for

school children and their families in the Central City neighborhood. Using donations, they purchased an historic, five-story building in a blighted neighborhood to serve as the center of a new organization. Reconcile New Orleans became the cornerstone for the broader rehabilitation of the neighborhood.

Father Tompson and Cuccia, together with neighbors and a fledgling board of directors, dreamed up a program that would train youth aged 16-24 to work in the New Orleans restaurant industry – and that would provide food to people in the neighborhood. In September 2000, Café Reconcile opened its doors and began operating as a restaurant, staffed by students of the program.

Although Fr. Tompson never got to visit the Café because of his illness, Gerald Duhon, a former student of Fr. Tompson and director of Reconcile from 2016 – 2022, said that his spirit is felt there still.

“When I got to Reconcile as a new director,” Duhon said, “I prayed to Harry: help me, guide me. I felt like I was taking care of a Jesuit legacy. In many ways, Reconcile saved me.”

In its 23 years, Reconcile has played a significant role in saving the more than 2,000 young people who have graduated from its Workforce Development Program. The restaurant continues to serve lunch five days a week. In September 2023, the *New York Times* named Café Reconcile one of the 50 best restaurants in the United States.



Guests of the Harry Tompson Center gather for a quiet game of dominoes and a respite from the heat of a New Orleans summer.

WELCOMING THE HOMELESS

Early in his pastorate, Fr. Tompson opened the doors of a building next door to Immaculate Conception Church to provide a space where unhoused people could use the restroom, wash their clothes and get a respite from the

harsh realities of street life for a few hours. After his death, this center was named “The Harry Tompson Center,” an honor that probably would have embarrassed the priest. But he would surely be proud of what the Center is doing today in its current location close to downtown. Each weekday, hundreds of people without housing come to the Center to shower, use clean restrooms, make phone calls and find safety and community. In 2022, case managers at the Center helped more than 125 guests find permanent housing, putting an end to their homelessness.

Vicki Judice, the director of the Harry Tompson Center from 2013 – 2020, said that the most important legacy of Fr. Tompson is the way the Center responds to immediate needs.



Volunteers accept donations for the Harry Tompson Center's bike program, which educates guests on how to build and repair bicycles. At the end of the course, guests graduate with a bike of their own!

“Father Tompson didn’t know anything about homelessness or statistics. He just saw a need and responded to it and welcomed people that others rejected,” Judice said. “I think he’d be proud of the Center today and its spirit of hospitality and warmth, so much of it offered by volunteers who were inspired by Fr. Tompson.”

Judice, who still volunteers at the Center after her retirement, said that people will often show up at the Center with donations, saying that Fr. Tompson inspired their generosity.

The ministries that Fr. Tompson envisioned and brought to life in New Orleans have not only changed the lives of thousands of poor children, disenfranchised youth and unhoused adults, they have changed the lives of the countless numbers of volunteers, leaders and donors who have kept his legacy of compassion alive.

A Place in the Classroom: Academic Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

By Ignatius Plato

Mary, a student with Down Syndrome at Regis University in Denver, wanted to live in a dorm on campus for her second year. Her parents questioned whether she would be able to live away from home. However, with support from Regis's GLOBAL Inclusive Program, Mary is living on campus and thriving socially, even showing newer students around campus and encouraging them to attend events.

Mary is one of the Regis students who benefit from opportunities offered through the Global Inclusive Program. Fourteen of the 18 students in the program, now including Mary, live on campus alongside other classmates, learning skills for independence as an adult and contributing their own perspectives to the academic culture.

Inclusion programs in Jesuit high schools and colleges are broadening their scope to include students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These programs respond to the challenge of meeting the secondary and higher education needs of students with these disabilities. Frequently, academic support that is available at the elementary school level does not carry over into high school or college. However, students with intellectual disabilities have voiced a strong desire to continue learning and developing skills for self-sufficiency into adulthood.

Jesuit schools of today are continuing the Jesuit tradition of going where the needs are and developing programs that promote success for marginalized groups.

Regis University's GLOBAL Inclusive Program

The GLOBAL Inclusive Program at Regis University started as a response to the historical exclusion of people with disabilities from college classrooms.



Helping students with intellectual disabilities enjoy the typical college experience is at the heart of Regis University's GLOBAL Inclusive Program.

The program's director, Dr. Jeanine Coleman, believes that the Inclusive Program is a clear example of the Jesuit principle of *cura personalis* ("care of the whole person").

"Students with intellectual disabilities are getting to do what all of our students do," Coleman said. "This opens the hearts and minds of faculty, students and administration. They start to think about what inclusion is and how it fits into diversity."

The program focuses on self-sufficiency for people with intellectual disabilities. Physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellness are given as much importance as professional development, allowing students with intellectual disabilities to shape their own lives for success.

The GLOBAL Inclusive Program bases its approach on the Universal Design for Learning, a framework for education that keeps accessibility at the forefront of curricula. This makes self-actualization a reality for all people, furthering the spirit of *cura personalis* and preparing students for life beyond college.

"The program has removed barriers for students with disabilities, students like Mary," said Coleman. "I hope that students who experience the program in the future, whether they have an intellectual disability or not, will take that experience into the world and help people from all backgrounds."

Coleman hopes that in the future Jesuit schools can come together to form a network that gives all students opportunities to realize their goals.

De Smet Jesuit High School's Inclusion Program

De Smet Jesuit High School in St. Louis launched a new inclusion program this school year, one aimed at providing students with intellectual disabilities access to a Jesuit secondary education.

De Smet Jesuit's Inclusion Program

stemmed from an identified need for supportive programs for students beyond middle school. It also serves as a response to Pope Francis' calls to create opportunities to foster belonging and inclusion for people with disabilities as an objective of ordinary pastoral action.

"In this way," writes Pope Francis, "we will be able to be credible when we proclaim that the Lord loves everyone, that he is salvation for everyone and invites everyone to the table of life, no one excluded."

"We wanted the Inclusion Program to shape a vision of service at De Smet Jesuit that includes everyone," said Fr. Ronald O'Dwyer, SJ, president of De Smet Jesuit. "High school students need to learn that not everyone thinks or develops in the same way. Embracing that truth and using it for good is a big part of what the Inclusion Program plans to do."

De Smet Jesuit's Inclusion Program began with the current academic year and serves two students with intellectual disabilities.

Along with special education classes that teach essential skills like writing, reading and math, the two students also take four traditional courses with their peers. Junior and senior peer mentors accompany them in these classes, allowing the classroom environment to integrate different developmental perspectives into the high school's culture.

"The spirit of service is core to the foundation of a Jesuit school," Principal Kevin Poelker said. "It's one thing to talk about service in the classroom, and it's another thing to go beyond the school and serve. The Inclusion Program seeks to go beyond even that: We want to embed service into the daily operation, the culture of De Smet Jesuit itself."

De Smet Jesuit is partnering with Saint Louis University's School of Education to study the impact of the Inclusion Program on the whole student body. This research will help Poelker and Fr. O'Dwyer fine-tune the program and further its spirit of inclusion in an informed way.

"We're making it all about service, inclusion and learning," Fr. O'Dwyer said. "Starting from within De Smet and making inclusion a part of the culture, and then spreading that spirit to the rest of the world."



A peer mentor assists a student with intellectual disabilities at De Smet Jesuit High School in St. Louis.



Mary Jolley's sacred space is at St. Charles College, Grand Coteau, Louisiana.



Mary Jolley: Companion in Mission

By Rosalie Tomeny

Mary Jolley grew up in Ward, Alabama, a rural community with few Catholics and certainly no Jesuits. Born in 1928, her childhood was shaped by the Great Depression, and she grew up wanting to be a source of help for others.

“I have tried to level the playing field for the poor, the distressed, and those in need of help in other ways,” she said. “For almost all of my work life, I have had the privilege of working to find creative solutions for alleviating intergenerational poverty through economic development and coordination of education and social services at the grassroots level. St. Ignatius addressed these same issues. Thus, my learning and being among the Jesuits has affirmed for me that my life’s work has been about doing the will of our Father in Heaven.”

Mrs. Jolley’s first encounter with a Jesuit in 1970 changed her life forever. As associate director of government relations for the American Vocational Association, she traveled from her home in Washington, D.C., to Lafayette, Louisiana, to speak to a group of teachers. While there, her host, Dr. Margaret Jolley, a professor at Nicholls State University, introduced Mary to her brother. Homer Richard Jolley was a former Jesuit, then working for the U.S. Medicaid Program. It could be said the meeting went well: They were married two years later, after Dick received dispensation of his Holy Orders and Mary had converted to Catholicism.

During the years following Vatican II, many former Jesuits sought ways to continue in relationship. “Dick and I happily joined in and attended meet-

ings of former Jesuits in Baltimore and Washington,” Mary said. “New friendships were made, and old friends reunited. One of the great blessings of my life has been to know many Jesuits over the last 50 years.”

Mary and Dick were married for almost 30 years. They shared a strong belief that the work Jesuits do is much needed, and they wanted to help provide support for the entire mission of the Jesuits.

“Dick and I decided early in our marriage that we wanted to support the Jesuits financially as much as possible,” Mary said, adding that they both felt deep gratitude for the education the Jesuits had provided for Dick.

After Dick’s death, Mary met with Fr. Warren Broussard, SJ, who was serving as director of the Jesuit Spirituality Center (JSC) in Grand

Coteau, Louisiana. “I wanted to attend a retreat, and I also wanted to make my own personal judgment about what I might do to honor Dick’s memory.”

She chose to contribute generously to the renovation of St. Charles College, home to the JSC. “Over the years, we tried to provide consistent support, with a final payment to be made upon my death,” Mary said.

She has since attended many retreats and has served on the JSC’s lay advisory board.

“Attending retreats has made a real difference in my life; I still review my journals when I need to be reminded of God’s purpose in my life,” Mary, now 95, said. “I still feel the joy of life-changing experiences that I recorded at the time. Lately, I have been reading one journal in which retired Jesuits reflected on their lived experiences and how they felt about their years of service.”

Mary puts into practice the Jesuit values she has learned by attending retreats and reading books by Jesuit authors. “I remember each day to find time for silence and reflection and to set aside a place in my home as a sacred space,” she said. “The tools I value most are the Daily Examen and seeking to practice the virtues of integrity, courage, love, forgiveness, hope, healing, service and justice. Discernment has played a significant role in my life.”

On one of her retreats at Grand Coteau, she met Fr. Brian Zinnamon, SJ, who had just completed

a community feasibility study to determine if a Cristo Rey school might succeed in Birmingham, Alabama. When the school opened, Mary was invited to serve on the board of directors. She also served on the advisory board of the Jesuit Social Research Institute (JSRI) at Loyola University in New Orleans.

“This was a great opportunity for me to learn more about the capacity of the Catholic Church to minister to the needs ‘of the least of these,’” said Mary, an area of particular interest to her.

Mary has been impressed by the principles of leadership exemplified by Jesuits and sought ways to incorporate them into her community development work as she was trying to help develop leaders in some of the small towns in Alabama that were economically depressed. She

read *Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-Year-Old Company that Changed the World*, a book about the Society of Jesus by Chris Lowney, a former Jesuit.

“I decided that I could take those principles of leadership, as defined by Lowney, and incorporate them into developing community leaders,” Mary said. She then reached out to Fr. Joseph Tetlow, SJ, who encouraged her project. “He gave me ideas that I passed along to a grassroots organization trying to prevent a waste dump from coming into their community.”

Mary is now a member of the Ignatian Heritage Society, the group of donors who’ve informed the province that they have included the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province in their estate plans. She is much loved and much appreciated,

not only for her generosity over the years, but for her own advocacy and support for people on the margins. She is a true companion in the Jesuit mission.

Mary Jolley has just completed a book entitled *Accidental Activist, a Memoir*, slated for publication by Livingston Press, University of West Alabama.

Rosalie Tomeny is a major gifts officer for the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province. You can reach her at rtomeny@jesuits.org.



Mrs. Mary Jolley and Rosalie Tomeny



Philip Nahlik, SJ Blends Science, Spirituality and Awe in His Care for Creation

By Therese Fink Meyerhoff

As a child, Philip Nahlik, SJ, wanted to be a zookeeper. A natural caregiver, he still wants to care for animals, as well as people, plants ... all of God's creation. He also enjoys teaching and creating networks. His Jesuit vocation, he says, enables him to combine all he wants to be as a person.

Nahlik graduated from St. Louis University High School and matriculated at Loyola University Chicago, where he earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry, with minors in visual communication, Catholic studies and math. While an undergrad, he became involved with *Healing Earth*, an online environmental science textbook compiled by scholars committed to educating others to protect the planet. He stayed on at Loyola to continue his work with *Healing Earth* as part of his doctoral studies.

Nahlik entered the Society of Jesus in 2017, before completing his doctorate. Two years later, as a Jesuit in first studies, he was back at Loyola Chicago, living with Jesuits from around the world. Many of them shared his passion for the environment.

"There was a huge 'green team' in the Loyola University Jesuit community," Nahlik said. "We conducted the first carbon audit of a Jesuit community and created a plan for what we could improve – from our food consumption, to replacing drafty windows, even replacing community cars with electric vehicles. Our eco-audit inspired other communities."

Nahlik's commitment to the environment has earned him two assignments, one as a *Laudato Si'* Action Plan Promoter and one on the province's Care for Our Common Home Commission. The commission's work

has included inviting each community to appoint an ecology representative and conduct an eco-audit of their own.

"There's been a lot of goodwill generated across the province," he said. "It comes back to Ignatius' First Principle and Foundation: Our goal is not necessarily to use less, but to use our resources more efficiently to serve God's mission."

Nahlik completed his doctorate in 2022. He teaches science at Rockhurst High School in Kansas City, Missouri, where he hopes his students are learning more than chemistry; he also wants them to recognize the intersection of science and faith.

"There's a trend right now toward eco-pessimism, where people think the planet is too damaged, and we can't effect real change. Young people especially feel it," he said. "That is a unique place where Christianity can contribute insight. God desires for us to maintain the planet and steward Creation. That's the gift we offer; the scientific world doesn't provide that kind of context. As Jesuits, we give people permission to have those kinds of conversations about what's truly important."

In addition to chemistry, Nahlik teaches a visual arts class at Rockhurst. Nature drawings, he says, are an easy way for people to begin to get in touch with Creation.

"Start with the natural world, because everyone can have an appreciation for it," he said. "Wonder is a fundamental perspective. It is an easy way for many people to connect with God. You can build from there."

Father Anthony Borrow, SJ

Technology is a Frontier for the Society of Jesus

By Therese Fink Meyerhoff

Father Anthony Borrow, SJ, is, in his own words, a bit of a nerd. He loves math, and he loves to code. For the past 20 years, he has been deeply involved with open-source computer technology. Now, as the director of information technology for Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), he finds ways to support the staff through technology solutions.

Jesuit Refugee Service is an international organization founded by the Society of Jesus to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of refugees. Located in more than 50 countries, JRS meets refugees' educational needs, as well as their most basic human needs like food and healthcare.

JRS staff often find themselves working in the midst of intense conflicts with minimal resources. With courage and creativity, they continue to make progress.

"I am proud to work with staff members who are incredibly committed to JRS's mission," Fr. Borrow said.

Father Borrow is currently collaborating to develop a database that will help JRS manage both the work they are doing with refugees and JRS's human resources. It helps track the data important to JRS, like whether the organization is meeting refugees' educational needs or how many packets of food have been distributed. It is his hope that consistent,



useful data will help alleviate some of the challenges JRS staff members deal with every day.

"Standing with refugees and accompanying them in their journey can mean that we are invited into some stressful and, at times, even dangerous situations," Fr. Borrow said. "These are heroic people, and I am just in awe. I love supporting and helping those who are doing such incredible work. It's my dream assignment: I get to use my tech skills to support that community of people doing some incredible work all over the world."

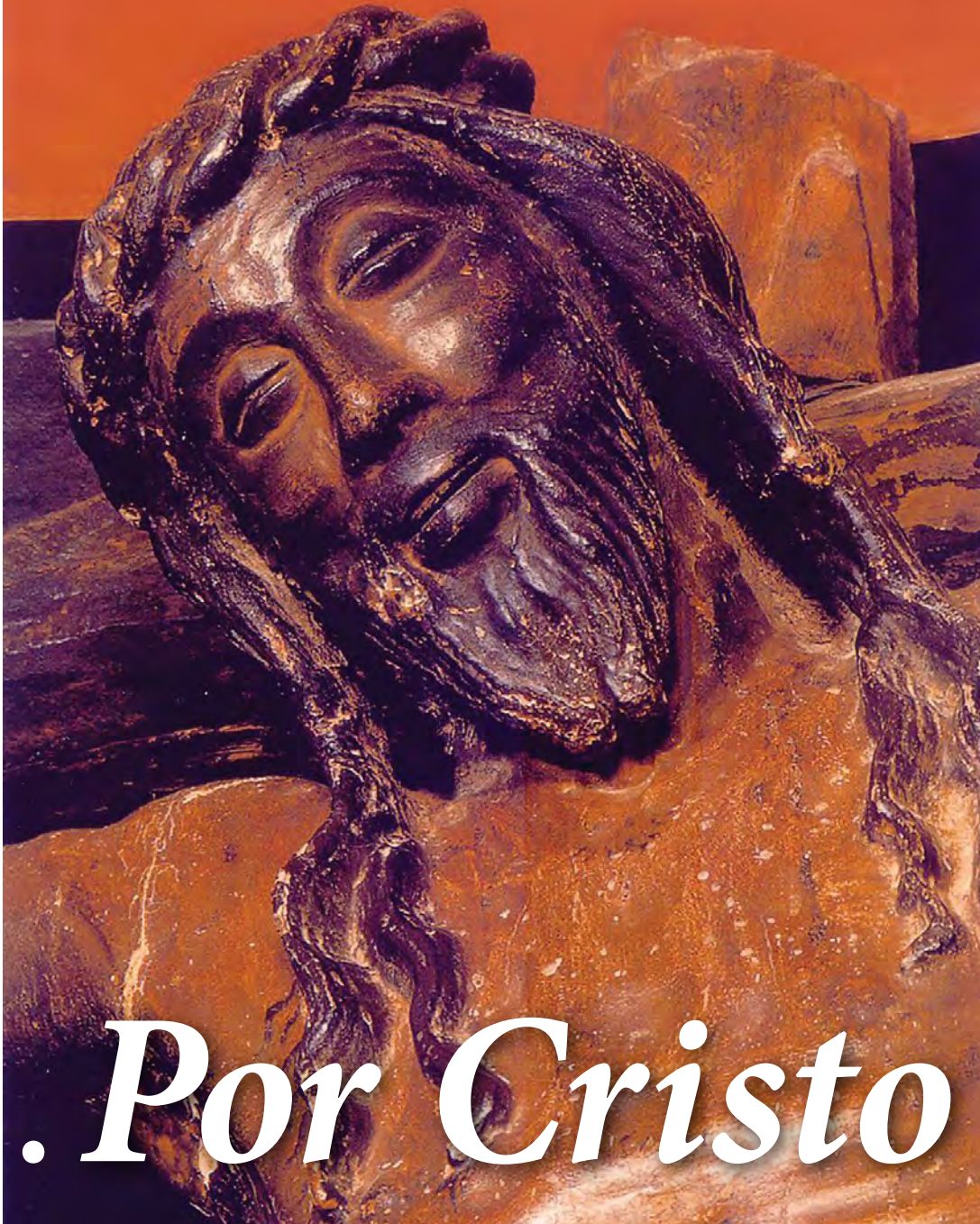
Community and technology come together frequently in Fr. Borrow's life and conversations. Twenty years ago, as a regent at Jesuit College Preparatory School of Dallas, he began to explore how he could better engage his more introverted students. He discovered Moodle, an open-source platform for online learning. "Open source" means that the code for the program is publicly available

and is ever evolving, thanks to user contributions.

"I still love Moodle as a way of collaboration," Fr. Borrow said. "It's an incredible implementation of the ideal of collaboration, because in the open-source community, it's people working together for motives other than profit. It's a fascinating way of working."

Father Borrow would like to see more Jesuits utilizing open-source technology, especially for education. He has big dreams about combining open-source educational technology with Creative Commons materials to offer free online educational opportunities. For him, it's about a just distribution of resources while promoting a culture of true collaboration.

"Education should be considered a human right," he said. "Anyone at any time should have the ability to learn, pretty much whatever it is that they want to learn. This is the sort of frontier area that I dream the Society of Jesus will grow into."



... *Por Cristo*

By Father Hung Pham, SJ

During the First Week of the Spiritual Exercises, after having thoroughly examined one's life through the grace of the Examen, the individual retreatant is instructed to make a colloquy, that is, a heartfelt conversation between a "friend to a friend," with Jesus who is crucified for us on the cross. In this specific context, the retreatant is moved to consider what to do with one's past, present and future life as indicated in the original Spanish text as, "*lo que he hecho por Cristo, lo que hago por Cristo, lo que debo hacer por Cristo.*"

Most often, this has been translated into English as, “what I have done for Christ, what I am doing for Christ, and what I ought to do for Christ.” The precious jewel of this Spanish prayer, which the English audience often fails to fully uncover, remains hidden in the Spanish preposition *por*.

In Spanish, there are two different prepositions, *por* and *para*, that are often translated into the English equivalent “for.” Yet, for Spanish speakers, each conveys a distinct meaning. *Para* is used to point the subject’s action toward its end goal or final purpose, (for example, “*Estoy estudiando español para trabajar en México* – I am studying Spanish in order to work in Mexico”).

Por, on the other hand, is used in two different ways. First, it is applied in a sentence to denote the cause that leads to the subject’s action. For example, “*Le agradezco a usted por su ayuda.*” “Thank you for your help” or “Because of your help, I thank you.” Second, *por* communicates the means by which the subject’s action is taking place. For example, “*Viajamos a México por avión.*” “We travel to Mexico by plane.”

Thus, the key that unlocks the Spanish instruction, “*lo que he hecho por Cristo,*” lies in the more complete understanding of the preposition *por*, especially in connecting with *Cristo*.

According to the first understanding of *por*, the action taken by the retreatant as indicated in the English translation, “what I have done for Christ,” ought not to be taken as of one’s own initiative, but only as a response to what Christ has first done for me.

Christ, not I, is the initiator, the one who has first to act, to love me, and to save me from my sins. Consequently, my action serves only as a response to Christ’s loving act.

According to the second understanding of *por*, although Christ’s loving act has moved me to respond, the *way* or *how* I am going to respond must be carefully studied and followed.

Por Cristo or “by the way of Christ” reminds the individual retreatant of the necessity of learning the way of Christ ever more intimately, of loving it ever more dearly and ultimately following it ever more closely.

Understanding and practicing both aspects of the Spanish instruction *por Cristo* demands an honest and thorough examination of the source of motivation for one’s action, as well as the manner and/or the means by which such an action is carried out.

What is the original source of motivation for my action?

Does it originate from a sense of gratitude or from my own agenda and/or false sense of self-importance and self-centeredness?

Equally important, in what manner or means am I going to conduct and/or carry out these actions?

We may take pride in the practice of “going into another’s door and coming out of our door,” whether “our door” means a specific spiritual tradition or a specific organizational or institutional manner of proceeding. When we share life with others – whether it is our home life, spiritual life, at work or in some other institution – we may want to shape it to our preferences. However, if we are not careful, we could find ourselves manipulating others to our own agenda, our own way of doing things.

The author of the *Spiritual Exercises* identifies this kind of manipulation and coercion as belonging to the evil spirit [332].

The phrase *por Cristo*, therefore, demands us all, as loved sinners, to carefully study the way of Christ by contemplating the life of Jesus, imitating his behavior and values, so that we may go into each other’s door, then together walk out through the door of Christ, and Christ alone, *por Cristo*.

We ask for the grace to know Jesus more intimately,
to love him more dearly, and to follow him more closely.

IN MEMORIAM

In company with Christ, who died and now lives, may they rejoice in your kingdom, O God.

FATHER EDWARD F. FLAHERTY, SJ



Father Edward F. Flaherty, SJ, died June 25, 2023, at St. Ignatius Hall in Florissant, Missouri. He was 104 years old, a Jesuit for 63 years and a priest for 58 years. At his death, he was the oldest Jesuit in the global Society of Jesus.

Father Flaherty served his entire apostolic ministry in Denver: at Regis College; as an auxiliary chaplain at Lowry Air Force Base; at St. Thomas Seminary and as a chaplain for the Knights of Columbus. In his spare time, he taught adult education in local parishes, and he ministered at the Shrine of St. Anne in Arvada for more than 20 years.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, on Oct. 3, 1918, he graduated from Rockhurst High School and Rockhurst College. He then entered the armed forces during World War II and served for six years, mostly in the medical corps. In 1959, at age 40, he entered the Jesuit novitiate in Florissant, Missouri.

Father Flaherty's military service was recognized in 2021, more than 75 years after his service ended. Read the story on the province website at bit.ly/Fr-Ed-Medals or scan the code to the right.



FATHER EUGENE C. RENARD, SJ



Father Eugene C. Renard, SJ, died Sept. 25, 2023, at St. Ignatius Hall in Florissant, Missouri. A native of Richmond Heights, Missouri, he began and ended his Jesuit service in the St. Louis area.

His first apostolic mission as a priest was as socius, or assistant, to the master of novices at St. Stanislaus Seminary in Florissant. He then taught at Regis High School in Denver before serving for several years as director of the nursing communities in St. Louis. From 1980 until 2006, he ministered in parishes in Colorado, before serving as a retreat and spiritual director at White House Jesuit Retreat in St. Louis.

Though retiring by nature, Fr. Renard embraced assignments that challenged and stretched him. His sweet disposition and pastoral sensitivity shone through his illness to the very end.

He was 93 years old, a Jesuit for 76 years and a priest for 63 years.



For complete obituaries, visit the province website: JesuitsCentralSouthern.org/in-memoriam

We remember with gratitude all that God has done through their lives of service to God and God's people.



THE JESUIT NOVITIATE

Jesuits begin their life in the Society of Jesus in the novitiate. Novices spend two years living in community, learning about the Society of Jesus, growing in prayer, deepening their relationship with Christ and discerning God's call to serve the Church as a Jesuit. They make the 30-day Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola and then are sent on mission to put into practice the graces of this foundational retreat. At the end of two years, they pronounce perpetual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Ultimately, the novitiate is where a man learns how to be a Jesuit and builds a foundation for his religious vocation.

This year, the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province welcomed eight men to the Novitiate of St. Stanislaus Kostka. With Novice Director Fr. Andrew Kirschman, SJ, and his assistant Fr. Hanh Pham, SJ, they join four second-year novices in the adventure that lies ahead.

Please keep our novitiate community in your prayers and pray that God will continue to bless the Society of Jesus with healthy and holy men who yearn to serve the Church and bring souls to God.



Jesuits Central and Southern
4511 West Pine Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63108-2191

Nonprofit
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Jefferson City, MO
PERMIT 210

If you are no longer interested in receiving Jesuits magazine, please let us know. Contact UCSAdvancement@Jesuits.org or 1-800-325-9924.
Visit <https://www.jesuitscentralsouthern.org/no-magazine/> to update your contact preferences.



A.M.D.G.

*Christ calls us to serve
a world in need.*



JESUITS[®]

To learn more, visit

BeAJesuit.org