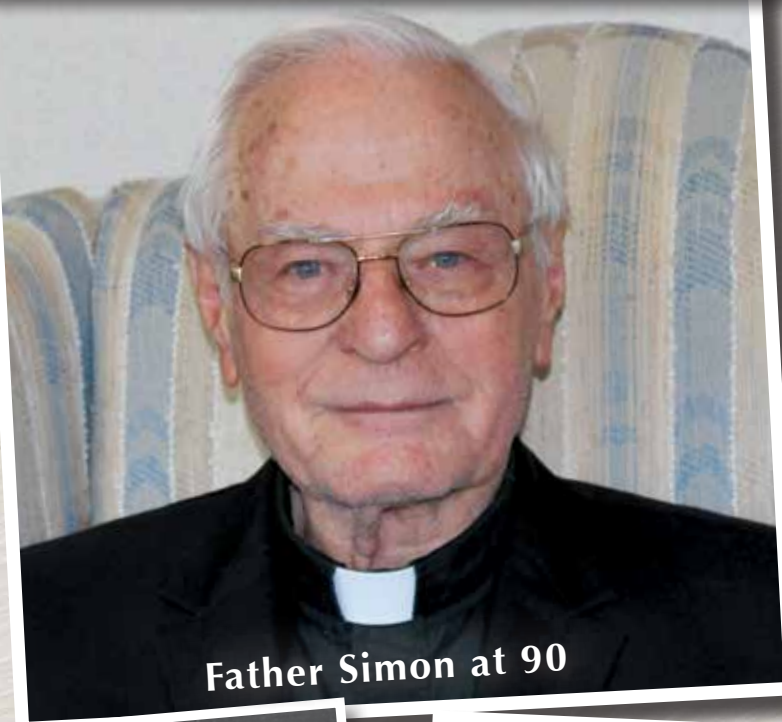
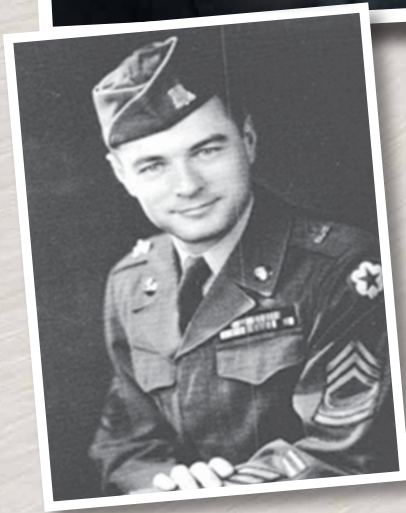


# The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY



Father Simon at 90



**"One is never retired from the Lord's work."**

**SUMMER 2014**

# The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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## The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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### **Missionaries of the Holy Family (MSF)**

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at 90 years of age.

Back Cover: A hayride during a  
Holy Family Adventure  
Weekend in Danville,  
Illinois in May 2013.

# Provincial Perspective

Dear Family,

As we look at today's world, we see challenging and troubling times. We wonder what is happening when we have so much knowledge and technology to make our world a peaceful and better place. Have we come to believe that we do not need God? We look at our society and wonder: **Where is God?**

As Catholics, we believe in Jesus Christ and His real presence in the Eucharist. His Spirit in us makes Him present by our words and actions. We need to open our hearts to the Spirit for changes to take place. Just look at the lives of the apostles and that first Christian community in the *Acts of the Apostles*, chapters one and two.

Reflecting on our call to holiness and to be missionaries, we are today's witnesses of Jesus Christ's message of salvation. **Our lives and example impact those around us!**

As you take opportunities to relax this summer, spend some quiet time and listen to the inspirations of the Spirit. You may be surprised at the changes that take place around you.

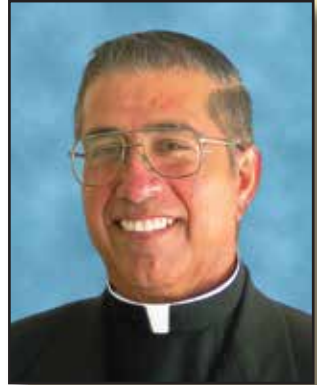
As a witness and follower of Jesus Christ, may you live your life fully, lovingly, and joyfully to bring about the healing and mercy much needed in our present world.

May God bless you and your family with a joyful and relaxing summer.

Sincerely in the Holy Family, I am

*Fr. Phil Sosa, M.S.F.*

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



*Very Rev. Philip Sosa, M.S.F.*

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## An Invitation

# The Family Forever Society

by Very Reverend Philip Sosa, M.S.F.

What is the Family Forever Society? It's very simple! Members of this special society are people who have remembered the Missionaries of the Holy Family in their wills or estate plans. Their bequests are called Legacy Gifts.

While most Legacy Gifts are made with the intention of the Missionaries of the Holy Family receiving benefits in the future, some Legacy Gifts are realized in the present. Gifts of securities or stock, real estate, and other tangible property are usually transferred before December 31 of any year so the benefactor can realize tax breaks for charitable donations.

Most Legacy Gifts are used as principal for our Retirement Trust Fund. While we do have a modest trust fund to help cover the rising cost of healthcare needed by the elderly and disabled members of our religious community, it is currently under funded.

**Please consider joining our Family Forever Society.** To receive a free booklet on preparing your will, please send your request to me using the envelope in the middle of this magazine, or call me at 1-888-484-9945. If you are remembering us in your will, please remember us as: *Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family - North American Province.*

Our Holy Family priests and brothers will always hold you and your loved ones in prayer. Isn't that what a Family is supposed to do? Thank you and God bless you... *forever.*



Forever Yours in the Holy Family,

*Fr. Phil Sosa, M.S.F.*

Very Reverend Philip Sosa, M.S.F.  
Provincial Superior, North American Province



## HOLY FAMILY LIFE

# Celebrating 50 Years as a Priest

by Jean Hrcirik, Sister of Father Simon Brzozowski, M.S.F.

Fifty years ago, two ecstatic family members left Saint James Catholic Church in Gonzales, Texas to travel to Saint Louis, Missouri to attend a once-in-a-lifetime event. It happened in their lives, right before their eyes, and they still can't quite believe it.

Simon Peter Brzozowski, Jr. and 31 other candidates were ordained priests on March 14, 1964 in the new Saint Louis Cathedral by Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter.

Father Simon was born in Gonzales, Texas on December 10, 1923. He was born along the banks of the Guadalupe River that wraps around what is known as Independence Park today. His parents, Simon Peter and Mary Ann (Wostal) Brzozowski, Sr. lived in a small house that stood at the edge of the winding river.

Simon received his early education

in local schools and graduated from Gonzales High School in the Class of 1940. The graduation ceremony for the 72 students was held in the Gonzales Museum Amphitheater.

During these same years, Simon received his religious upbringing in his home and at Saint James Catholic Church. In reality, according to Simon, the Church was our classroom. To this day, he still remembers his catechism teachers, Mrs. William Cole and Mrs. Ray Shanklin. He was confirmed by Bishop Drossaerts of San Antonio who brought the Confirmation class alive by asking, "Was Jesus born in Gonzales or San Antonio?"



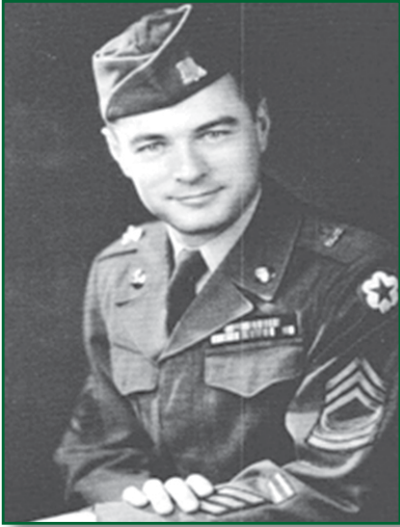
Father Simon with his mother in 1964.



Father Simon as a young boy in Gonzales, Texas.

After graduating from Gonzales High School, Simon attended Baldwin Business College in Yoakum, Texas, which seems to have served him well for future duties. Our family remem-

bers how his fingers could fly at the typewriter! His first job was at Kelly Field in San Antonio, as a Messenger of Internal Mail distributing technical orders on the base.



Father Simon in 1943 as a member of the U.S. Army in World War II.

He was soon inducted into the Army Air Corps at Fort Sam Houston. He served a total of nine years in military service, as a clerk-typist and in Army Finance.

Simon was stationed in the jungles of New Guinea at General Douglas MacArthur's South Pacific Operations. He recalls the dropping of the atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. He remembers that terrible time and the breathless wait for surrender as his eyes were on the incoming teletype via the Army Airways Communication System.

Simon was also stationed in Nuremberg,

Germany. In the company of his military chaplain Colonel Cate, a priest of the Camillian Fathers who cared for the sick, Simon was able to attend the Nuremberg War Criminal Trials held in Nuremberg's Palace of Justice. The Four Allied Powers of the U.S.A., England, France, and Russia were represented, and testimony was given in the different languages. Simon had seen the rubble and the effects of World War II, but he had also seen the work toward justice and peace.

Simon returned to the United States in 1948 to the Army Finance School for Military Instructors in Saint Louis. When the time came, he did not choose to re-enlist again, and so Master Sergeant Simon P. Brzozowski, Jr. was honorably discharged in 1952.

During this time, the Lord was beginning to make it evident He wanted Simon to serve Him. On his way home to Texas, Simon attended a retreat at the Trappist Monastery in Gethsemane, Kentucky. He said he was struck by the immense work being done, the silence, and the contemplatives praying for the salvation of the world.

He then came home to visit his parents who were now living at Bebe, Texas and to become acquainted with his younger sisters and brother. He came home to a tremendous drought, hardship on the farm, and little funds coming in from the family labors. Consequently, Simon worked for the City of Gonzales Public Works, and he proudly stated, *"I got to repair some of our streets and curbs."*

Then the certain day came! Father Peter Roebrocks, M.S.F., pastor of Saint James in Gonzales, was called to be the rector of Holy Family Seminary in Saint Louis in 1957, with school beginning in September. Upon leaving Saint James, Father Pete said to Simon, *"See you in September."* Simon said, *"That was it! I knew the way I should go!"*

Simon entered Holy Family Seminary and began seven years of study toward the priesthood: two years of college studies, including Church History; one year of philosophy; and four years of theology. In the latter part of his fourth year of theology, Simon was ordained.

After ordination, Father Simon had a few more studies to complete, and then on June 6, 1964, he returned to Texas to his hometown parish, Saint James in Gonzales, to celebrate his First Mass! He then returned to the Holy Family Seminary in Saint Louis to teach as a faculty member and assist at Saint Wenceslaus Church.

Thereafter, Father Simon was the assistant pastor at Saint James in Gonzales, and he was assigned to serve Sacred Heart and Saint Patrick's of Waelder, Texas. While in Gonzales, he also celebrated Masses at Warm Springs and at the National Guard Armory.

He served in many other parishes in Texas, including New Braunfels, Beeville, Jourdanton, Helena, Charlotte, and Corpus Christi where he was chaplain at Memorial Hospital, on call 24 hours a day and seven days a week for 12 years. Father Simon tells how they once had to hurriedly move patients

into the inner hallways of the hospital when the brutal hurricane Cecilia began blowing out the windows of Memorial Hospital in August 1970. While in Corpus Christi, he also served two nursing homes.



Father Simon in the 1970s.

After this, Father Simon was assigned as chaplain for the Little Sisters of the Poor Nursing Home for eight years in Saint Louis. The Little Sisters of the Poor operate an eight-story, 250-bed facility for the sick and elderly. Father Simon described the chapel in this facility to be as large as the entire Saint James Catholic Church in Gonzales!

Then Father Simon was assigned to a smaller, 70-resident facility of the Little Sisters of the Poor in Louisville, Kentucky, while serving as chaplain for a nearby hospital. He fondly recalls the great excitement in Louisville every year at Kentucky Derby time.



Father Simon concelebrating Mass at Saint Joseph's Church in Donna, Texas on March 15, 2014. The Mass, along with the reception and dinner that followed, was in honor of the 50th anniversary of Father Simon's ordination as a Priest of Jesus Christ.



Father Simon (middle) with the Knights of Columbus in the parish hall at Saint Joseph's in Donna, Texas on March 15, 2014. To Father Simon's right is Bishop Emeritus Raymundo Peña of the Diocese of Brownsville. To Father Simon's left is Very Reverend Philip Sosa, Provincial Superior of the Missionaries of the Holy Family.




A great part of Father Simon's priesthood has been spent in serving the sick and the elderly. Finally, needing a little respite, Father Simon moved to the Holy Family Formation House in San Antonio. After a short time there, Father Simon lived in community and helped his brother priests in caring for the faithful of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Seguin, Texas. He is currently in residence at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Donna, Texas, which is only 10 miles from the border of Mexico.

On December 10, 2013, Father Simon celebrated his 90th birthday. On March 15, 2014, the community of Saint Joseph Parish in Donna honored Father

Simon for serving Jesus Christ and His Church as a priest for 50 years.

On June 8, Pentecost Sunday, he went "home" to his hometown parish of Saint James in Gonzales to commemorate his 50th anniversary. He celebrated Mass with the parish pastor, Fr. Paul Raaz; Fr. Alberto Treviño, M.S.F.; and the Very Rev. Philip Sosa, provincial superior of the Missionaries of the Holy Family.

"Are you retired?" someone asked Father Simon recently. He smiled warmly and replied, "**No one is ever retired from the Lord's work.**"

God bless you, Father Simon. 

## The Story was Told

by Jean Hrnčirik, Sister of Father Simon

The story was told a long time ago –

When our Dad was a small boy, crawling around on the floor, he came up to a crock of rising bread dough – near a warm heater.

His small fingers pinched a tiny portion; it tasted good. He ate until... the household was thrust into a sudden tragedy. The baby was choking to death!

The mother was frantically trying to retrieve the rising dough out of the baby's throat. The baby was turning purple –

The baby's father dropped to his knees, crying out, "*Lord, please save my son!*" He added a further desperate plea, "*I promise you, he will become a priest.*"

In time, our Dad met our Mother. There are seven of us; our Dad did not become a priest. In time, his son did.



## A PROFILE OF SERVICE



### Eternal Rest Grant Unto Him, O Lord

**Brother John Griffin, M.S.F.**

**June 6, 1945 – March 16, 2014**

Fortified with the Sacraments of Holy Mother Church, Brother John Griffin, M.S.F., age 68, died on Sunday, March 16, 2014 in San Antonio, Texas.

Brother John was born on June 6, 1945 in East Liverpool, Ohio to Eunice Driscoll and George Griffin. He was one of four brothers and two sisters. His oldest brother, George, was a priest ordained in 1973 and is now deceased. Brother John is survived by only one sister, Mary Boyd.

After graduating from high school, Brother John enlisted in the Army for three years. Afterwards, he took up residence in Alexandria, Virginia where he joined the Catholic Young Adults Club. He was employed by the Safeway Stores, and after putting in many years of hard work, he retired in 1993. He also worked for the United States Postal

Service during the 1993 Christmas Season.

It was in January 1994 when he began thinking about life as a religious brother. After making inquiries, and after much prayer, Brother John applied with the Missionaries of the Holy Family. In 1998, he made the First Profession of Vows after his novitiate year at Holy Family Church in New Braunfels, Texas. He continued there for two more years working in numerous pastoral ministries.


In October 2001, he was assigned to Saint Wenceslaus Parish in Saint Louis, Missouri, and he made his Perpetual Profession of Vows on August 15, 2003. He retired when his physical disabilities prevented him from serving in any consistent pastoral ministry.

In March 2011, he took up residence

at Padua Place Nursing Home in San Antonio. In December 2013, Brother John had surgery to correct the severe curvature in his neck and back. He was recovering for three months, but developed meningitis in his brain. On March 16, 2014, Brother John was called home by Our Lord to his eternal resting place.

*Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen. May his soul,*

*and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

**Memorials:** Using the return envelope found in the middle of this magazine, please send any contributions in Memoriam of Brother John Griffin, M.S.F., or make an online gift at our website, [www.MSF-America.org](http://www.MSF-America.org). Thank you and God bless you. 

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## Men of God: Priests Forever

In this Year of Our Lord 2014, six priests of the Missionaries of the Holy Family are celebrating anniversaries of their ordination to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.



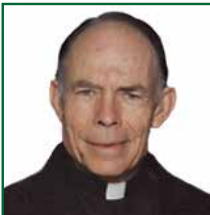
Fr. Arthur Ockwood, M.S.F.  
55 years



Fr. Simon Brzozowski, M.S.F.  
50 years



Fr. James Wasser, M.S.F.  
40 years



Fr. Jack Kilburg, M.S.F.  
35 years



Fr. Ignatius Pajak, M.S.F.  
30 years



Fr. Alberto Treviño, M.S.F.  
30 years

We thank God for our priests, and we beseech Him to send us many more. If you would like to send a Tribute Gift in honor of one or more of these Men of God, please use the envelope found in the middle of this magazine. Thank you and God bless your family!

## Do You Want More Holy Priests?

Please join the Holy Family Circle and help foster vocations to the priesthood and brotherhood. Member benefits include:

- Daily Remembrance in Prayer by Holy Family Priests and Brothers.
- Enrollment in the Holy Family Perpetual Mass Association.
- Invitations to Holy Family Events. (i.e., ordinations, anniversaries, etc.)

Find your level of joyful giving below, complete the contact information, and mail this form, or a copy of it, in the envelope in the middle of the magazine. Thank you and God bless you!

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## Around The Province...



Father Alberto Treviño, M.S.F. with our Brother candidates serving their novitiate in Santiago, Chile: Augustus C.J. Akudolu (left) and Oscar B. Resendez.



## YOUTHFUL OUTLOOK

### Chastity is a Virtue

by Miss Ava, 13

Parishioner at Saint Francis Borgia Church (Washington, Missouri)

On January 22, 2014, I walked in the Annual March for Life in Washington, DC. Walking in the march was important to me because it gave me a chance to stand up for the unborn babies who do not have a voice. Thousands of people were all marching for the same cause. It was definitely an experience I will never forget!

The dictionary describes chastity as "refraining from sexual intercourse." The Church describes chastity as a virtue. To me, chastity is a life choice. **Choosing to live a life of chastity will bless me with true holiness, health, and happiness.**

Recently, I attended a Right Start program. This program taught us about chastity and the truth of what an abortion really is. I was taught that I am obeying God by keeping the virtue of chastity. I can be granted true holiness by remaining pure and following God's plan for me. I will be fully happy knowing that I have a strong relationship with God.




Right Start taught us that by remaining virtuous, we will be respected not only by others but also by ourselves. Being pure can also protect me from unwanted diseases, such as the human papillomavirus (HPV) and other sexually transmitted diseases.

STDs could affect my future spouse, including my future children!

Choosing a lifestyle of chastity will protect me from an unexpected pregnancy. Those who choose an unchaste life could end up becoming pregnant, which could lead to an abortion. I think it is important for women to know that abortion is not their only option. Many women become scared and want a solution right away.

Considering adoption, going to a crisis pregnancy center, talking to a priest, and asking God for help in prayer are important ways to learn about the moral alternatives to an abortion.

I hope the women considering abortion are filled with the Holy Spirit and choose life. **I choose to live a life of chastity, will you?** 



## LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

# All I Want for Christmas

by Lisa E. Gonzalez

Director, Saint Joseph's Altar Servers



Altar Server Officers and Leaders

The altar server officers and leaders of Saint Joseph's Parish in Donna, Texas met in the fall of 2013 to plan a Christmas party for all the altar servers. What evolved was nothing anyone would have expected!

Instead of these kids thinking about themselves, they wanted to help others. They opted to host a Toy Drive & Christmas Party for needy children in the community. With the blessing of Father Robert DeLong, M.S.F., parish administrator, we quickly got things going by placing a large box at the entrance to the church for toy donations. What hap-



Stuffed Toy Adoption Center

pened over the next few weeks was just amazing! The parish community of Saint Joseph's came through in a big way.

After the first week, the donation box was overflowing, and we

had to find space to house all the toys. At the end of the toy drive, we had plenty of toys to give to approximately 300 children, from newborns through 6th grade, and we still had a few toys left for Christmas 2014. Yes, that's right; toys left over for Christmas 2014!

A gift wrapping party was also planned and the altar servers spent an afternoon sorting, wrapping, and individual-

ly labeling each gift. Many long hours were spent on this project, but in the end it was well worth it.




Santa Claus and Pancho Claus

The altar servers didn't stop with the toys for the kids. After all, you can't just distribute gifts without having a party. A Christmas Party was planned for December 2013 at the parish hall. Approximately 75 families, totaling 440 people, were invited to the Christmas Party. We had activities for the kids, along with a meal for everyone in attendance.

Now, it wouldn't be Christmas without Santa Claus distributing the presents, right? The kids and families were given an extra special treat in not only having Santa Claus in attendance, but also

his cousin "Poncho" Claus. Seeing the kids' faces light up when they received their gift from Santa or Poncho Claus was priceless. Many of our young altar servers commented that this touched their hearts by realizing how much they have compared to others less fortunate. It brought a sense of pride to our youth to be able to help kids and families in need.

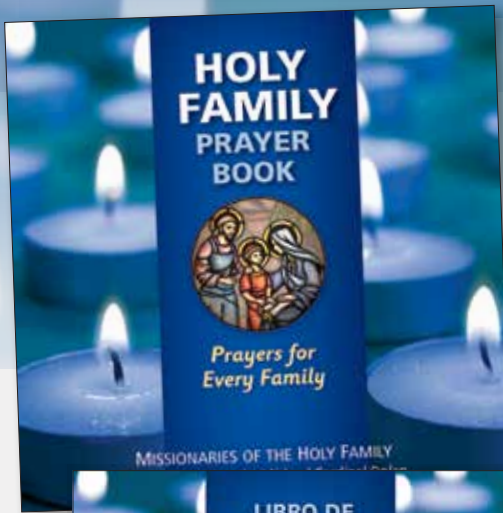
The altar servers wish to thank Father Phil Sosa, M.S.F., provincial superior, for his support and for being a part of our first Annual Toy Drive & Christmas Party. A very special thank you to Father Robert for his continued support and encouragement of the altar servers. To all the various parish organizations, parish community, and altar server parents, thank you for coming together and making this special event possible.

The senior altar servers who will be going away to college this fall have stated that they want to return during Christmas Break to help with the project again. We are already looking forward to the second Annual Toy Drive & Christmas Party in December 2014! 



The Altar Servers with Father Robert DeLong, M.S.F.

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Foreword by  
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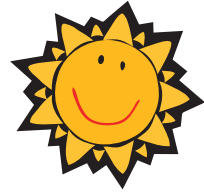
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## PARENTS' TIME-OUT

### Reverse Resolve

Contributed by Dr. Ray Guarendi

Dear Dr. Ray,

*I've had a childhood loaded with emotional baggage.*

*How can I be a responsible parent if I suffered through*

*irresponsible models of parenting? — Needing to Unload*

Almost without fail, parents with chaotic pasts speak, in different words, about the same issue. One father tagged this desire to overcome succinctly: reverse resolve.

Here is how he explain it:

*"I was the last of seven, and my father was 43 when I was born. By the time I got interested in sports at the age of 10, he didn't have time for me. I told myself then that if I ever had children of my own, I would give them a great deal of support. I vividly remember the day my dad died. I came home from the hospital and there was a picture of both my parents on the bureau. I went up to the picture, and I looked up at my dad and said, 'Dad, it's a shame, but I never knew you.' I make it a point to spend time with my kids."*

**Reverse resolve** is that reaction by which parents refuse to remain victims of their own childhoods, and they resolve instead to rise above them. It is more than a desire to avoid repeating their parents' mistakes. It is the determination to use painful memories

to fuel the drive to become genuinely good parents despite a lack of childhood training.

As these adults left the direct influence of their parents, they were able to reinterpret past events, no longer being controlled by them, but turning them into vivid guidelines for what not to do at all costs with their own families. In essence, they made past pain work to their families' present benefit.


#### **Emotions are powerful motivators!**

They can drive an individual to do the exact opposite of whatever happened to create the emotion. For example, if loneliness was the dominant childhood emotion fostered by a neglectful parent, this feeling can evolve into the underlying self-will never to be even slightly neglectful if and when one becomes a parent.

Many, many parents had the chance to learn from and build upon the solid upbringings their parents gave to them. But not all parents are so fortunate. In utilizing reverse resolve, parents are living proof that no matter how you were

raised, no matter what abuse or cruelty you witnessed or experienced, the seeds for achieving a quality parenthood still live within you. They cannot be destroyed. Your past does not place a ceiling upon the heights of parenting you can reach. You are not destined to become what your parents were, or even a small part of what your parents were. You have the capability to stretch yourself far beyond the adequate to raise a family the likes of which you never knew.

**Believing in your potential for excellence** is a necessary first step to a quality family life. It primes you to watch, listen, and learn from others on how to build upon your own strengths.

Excerpt from: *Back to the Family*, pages 43-45. Copyright © Dr. Ray Guarendi, Villard Books 



**Dr. Ray Guarendi**

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

## *Around The Province...*



Leon Frigillana became a Permanent Member of the Holy Family Prayer Association in April 2014. He received his certificate during a quarterly Prayer Association Mass at Saint Wenceslaus Church in Saint Louis, Missouri.



The Daughters of Mary are a group of young women from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Seguin, Texas who engage in prayer and service for the parish under the patronage of Our Blessed Mother.



## UNITED IN CHRIST

# Our Missionary Work in the Colonias

by Father Eka Yuantoro, M.S.F.

According to the constitution of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, the specific goal of our congregation is to bring the Gospel to all those whom the Lord our God calls. We involve ourselves primarily where the Church is either not yet known or no longer fully alive. Our missionary task is to “bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, give sight to the blind, and let the oppressed go free.” (see **Luke 4:18**)



This is a Catholic Home 

With this spirit, it is our mission to proclaim the Gospel to the poor people living in the colonias. The term colonia is a Spanish word for a residential neighborhood of unregulated settlements. Colonias are found in all of the border states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, but the largest number of settlements are in Texas. According to current data, Texas has approximately 2,300 colo-

nias with a total population of at least 450,000 people.

Saint Joseph Parish is in the city of Donna, Texas in the county of Hidalgo. This county alone has approximately 950 colonias. In Donna, there are now more than 50 colonias, and the number is growing.

Pope Francis in his 2014 Lenten Message described three types of destitution: material destitution, moral destitution, and spiritual destitution.

He said that destitution is not the same as poverty. Destitution is poverty without faith, without support, and without hope. He said that in the poor and outcast, we see Christ's face. By loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ. The spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi encourages my work in the colonias. Saint Francis became poor like Jesus who emptied

Himself and took the form of a slave to be one of us. (see **Philippians 2:5-11**)

The majority living in the colonias are undocumented and illegal; it is what it is. Most cross the border to find a better life, and the great majority are Hispanic. They have no permanent work, social security, or health-care. It is truly hard for them to establish a solid foundation because of a lack of assistance from charities, government programs, and the Catholic Church.

**If I see this situation, what should I do?** Should I just serve the people of Saint Joseph Parish and close my eyes to the realities of the colonias around me? Am I truly a priest of Jesus Christ, a Missionary of the Holy Family, if I do not serve the spiritual needs of the poor in my midst?

When Saint Paul proclaimed the Gospel to the people of Athens, he tried to tell them about Jesus Christ in their own language and within their pagan culture. It was truly a difficult situation for him, but he did it to guide the people to salvation. It is a similar situation for us in proclaiming the Good News to the families living in the colonias. Many are suffering from no electricity, clean water, or sanita-

tion systems in their small houses or mobile homes. (see **Acts 17**)

They are afraid that our government will send them back to their native country. They fled their homeland because they fear the widespread violence, kidnapping, human and sex trafficking, gangs, and drug cartels. Unfortunately, the Rio Grande Valley of Texas is experiencing many of the same problems.

Due to a lack of spiritual guidance, some

people in the colonias believe in black magic, Santa Muerte (The Goddess of Death), sorcery, and brujeria (witchcraft). It is our challenge to proclaim the Good News to those who are hurting spiritually and in need of a better life.

The majority of families living in the colonias come from Mexico and Latin America, and they are Catholic. It seems something like the Jewish Diaspora. They are trying to keep their Catholic tradition as a symbol of their identity. For example, they celebrate Las Posadas, which dramatizes the search of Joseph and Mary for lodging before the birth of Jesus. They honor the Blessed Mother under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and they place flowers on the graves of their ancestors on All Souls' Day (Nov. 2).



*Dirt Road to Colonia*

This is truly an opportunity for us to proclaim the Gospel to the people in

There is a great need for faith formation because most living in the colonias are under 20 years of age. Some of them have already arranged a type of “common law marriage,” or they are just simply living together. These young people need guidelines and guardians who will help them through the process of realizing full participation in the Church.



*Colonia Ministry Team*

the colonias because they are trying to keep their Catholic identity. Although they say that they are Catholic, some of them have not received the sacraments, or they have lost their sacramental documents. This becomes an issue when they want to get married or have their children baptized. The majority thirst for faith formation because they are experiencing culture shock.


Saint Joseph Parish has an outreach program for helping families in the colonias. Our team has identified some people living in the colonias who serve as our contacts. These contact persons organize their neighborhoods for worship and catechetical activities, and I celebrate Mass in their homes. The families prepare and decorate their home altars. In the months of May and October, we pray the Rosary. In chapter two of the *Acts of the Apostles*, we read about the early Christians breaking bread in their homes and sharing the Good News. We are doing the same.

**This is never-ending missionary work right here in the United States!** We must continue to serve the families in the colonias by bringing Jesus to



*Father Eka Yuantoro, M.S.F.*

them. This is what the founder of our religious community, Servant of God Father John Berthier, would expect us to do.

I am a Missionary of the Holy Family, and I will serve the poor in my midst, in whatever country God sends me, and I am happy to do so. God bless your family. 



## GO TO JOSEPH

# Every Catholic is a Missionary

by Father Dan Hawkins, M.S.F.

*“Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are ‘disciples’ and ‘missionaries,’ but rather that we are always the ‘missionary disciples’... So, what are we waiting for?”*

-- Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospel*

Every Catholic should be a missionary! Catholic means universal, for all. We must begin by changing the way we think about what it means to be Catholic. This is not brought about merely through retreats and conferences, for example. It is a call to change the way we think as Catholics and to allow this new mindset to inform our activities.

Can we say that the individuals involved in all of our different parish ministries have a clear understanding of the ultimate purpose of being a missionary – which is to draw people to Christ, or, in other words, to evangelize?

The Church clearly teaches that our Catholic identity is missionary. Rediscovering this critical element of our spirituality is the only way to reach out to those who have wandered away or to those who are not yet members of the Church.

As a source of inspiration, the following intercessory prayer to Saint Joseph is from the book, *Go to Joseph*, by

Brother Michael O’Neill McGrath,  
O.S.F.S.: 



### Go to Joseph

Saint Joseph, our inspiration and guide, watch over those who are suffering, sick, neglected; those seeking “room at the inn.” Guide us to build the Kingdom of God on earth as Jesus proclaimed.

Remind us to be vigilant for the millions of refugees in our world, who roam as you once did in fear of death and for the sake of family, in lands foreign to them.

Saint Joseph, help us to be a witness to your Jesus.

Amen.



## DEAR FATHER

### Ask Father John

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

**Q: *Dear Father,*** *can a Catholic vote for a pro-abortion candidate? I vote a straight party ticket regardless if the candidates are pro-abortion. I am a die-hard and loyal to my party, and I will not vote for someone outside the party just because they are pro-life. Am I committing a sin by voting for these candidates?*

**A:** You, as a Catholic, have a moral obligation to promote the common good when going to the polls and exercising your voting privileges. First of all, you should have a well-formed Christian conscience according to Church teaching on faith and morals, which you are apparently neglecting because of party politics.

When it comes to abortion, the Church teaches that the unborn child is always an innocent party, and no law may permit the taking of his or her life. Even when a child is conceived through incest or rape, the fault is not the child's who should not suffer death for the sins of others. **There isn't any question that Catholics should not vote for candidates who support abortion.**

First of all, if all candidates for an office support abortion equally, you should abstain from voting for that particular office.

Secondly, if one of the candidates is less in favor of abortion than the oth-

ers, you could: **(A)** abstain from voting for any of the candidates because they all support abortion in varying degrees, or **(B)** vote for the candidate who is the least in favor of abortion in the hope of saving some babies.

Thirdly, if there is an independent or third party candidate who is pro-life, you could vote for that person, even if he or she has no real chance of winning. There are usually write-in opportunities, too.

Finally, as a Catholic, you must never vote for a candidate, even partially, because of his or her pro-abortion stance. Doing so would cause you to bear some responsibility for the abortions that the election of this candidate would make probable.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us that: "Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion



willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law." **CCC 2271**

It also tells us that: "Formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense. The Church attaches the canonical penalty of excommunication to this crime against human life." **CCC 2272**

It goes on to tell us that: "The inalienable right to life of every innocent human individual is a constitutive element of a civil society and its legislation." **CCC 2273**

You see, when you vote for pro-abortion candidates, this is what happens: "The moment a positive law deprives a category of human beings of the protection which civil legislation ought to accord them, the state is denying the equality of all before the law. When the state does not place its power at the service of the rights of each citizen, and in particular of the more vulnerable, the very foundations of a state based on law are undermined." **CCC 2273**

Also, the following is more wisdom from our Church leaders on voting with a Catholic conscience:


- Archbishop Emeritus Harry Flynn of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul & Minneapolis granted an *Imprimatur* (proclaiming it free of doctrinal or moral error) to *An Examination of Conscience*, published by the Leaflet Missal Company of Saint Paul, Minnesota, © 2002. Included in the list of mortal sins on page

15: "Knowingly voting for someone who is pro-abortion."

- Cardinal Raymond Burke, the top canon lawyer in the world, has publicly stated: "Catholics who support such pro-abortion candidates participate in a grave evil. They must show a change of heart and be sacramentally reconciled or refrain from receiving Holy Communion." (Catholic News Service, June 29, 2004)
- Pope Saint John Paul II wrote in his apostolic exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*: "Above all, the common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights -- for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture -- is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination."

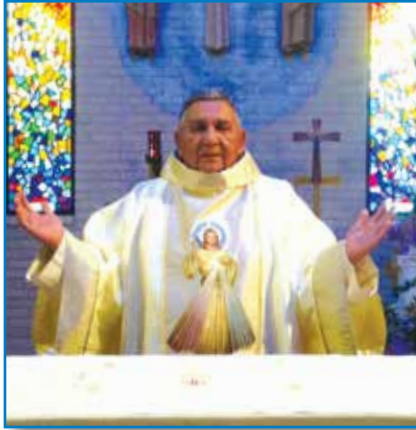
**I recommend that you contact Priests for Life** for free copies of a concise, easy-to-read pamphlet entitled *Voting with a Clear Conscience*. Call (888) 735-3448 or send an e-mail request to [mail@priestsforlife.org](mailto:mail@priestsforlife.org).

Like yourself, most voters, Catholic or not, do not see the harm they are doing by voting for candidates who support the Abortion Holocaust.

After all, would you vote for Adolf Hitler and the Jewish Holocaust if he was running on **your** party's ticket? I certainly hope not! 



## ANSWERING THE CALL



### Blessed with Two Vocations

by Deacon Raymond M. Ybarra

**H**ello! My name is Deacon Raymond M. Ybarra, and I was born in New Braunfels, Texas on October 16, 1950. I came from a family with a very strong Catholic faith, and I remember my parents and grandparents attending Mass every weekend. They taught me the love of Jesus Christ, and I could really see how much they loved Him.

**I wanted what they had**, so I began my journey with Christ at the early age of seven by receiving First Holy Communion. I then wanted to be an altar server at the Lord's Table. It wasn't easy for me because I knew very little English, and Mass at that time was in Latin, but I still wanted to be a part of the celebration. When I was 10 years of age, Sister Jacinta at Our Lady of

Perpetual Help Church helped me to learn my prayers. She was so patient with me!

Sister Jacinta asked me and a few others to help her clean the sacristy on Saturdays, and I enjoyed being in church very much. I remember that the communion wafers would come in a tin can, and Sister Jacinta knew that I collected cans. She would shake the cans to check if they were empty before giving them to me.

One day, I took a can home so I could use it to store my marbles. In the can, however, were some communion wafers. I pretended that I was a priest, and I celebrated a "Mass" for my brother and sister. I used the wafers for "Communion." At that time, I really

wanted to be a priest!


When I was 15, I went to a Cursillo Retreat, and I was the youngest person there, but I wanted to experience what my parents and grandparents enjoyed so much. As a teenager, I joined the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO), and I was a lector in English and Spanish at Our Lady of Perpetual Help. I graduated from New Braunfels High School in 1969, and volunteered to join the U.S. Marine Corps.

When I returned home, I married my wife Alicia, and I began my vocation as a married man, eventually with children. However, I never neglected my Catholic faith after I was married. During the years of being a husband and a father, I still wanted to do more for God. I became an acolyte again (altar server) so I could assist at the Lord's Table.

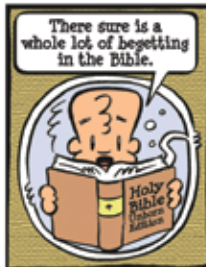
People often talk about a calling from God. This does not mean that God talks to us in person, but He talks to our hearts and minds. He does not force Himself upon us. This is what is meant by a calling, and I had a calling from God to enter into a second vocation, to become a deacon.

With the wonderful support of my loving wife Alicia, she helped me by attending all my classes while I was in formation. I also had the support of my two daughters Christina and Angie and my son Danny. I was ordained a deacon on September 16, 1990.

My wife and I have been very blessed to serve in two parishes in New Braunfels: nine years and counting at Holy Family Church and 15 years at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. In my 24 years as a deacon, I had the privilege to serve in many places in Europe, including Fatima, Portugal and Lourdes, France. I was also able to serve in Mexico City at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and I got to see Pope Saint John Paul II up close in person.

**The Lord has showered many blessings upon me.** I love my two vocations, I love my ministry as a deacon, and I love the people I serve. Many people have touched my heart, and I have touched many people in return. Life has been and continues to be a wonderful experience. I always pray for all the men who are called to be deacons to answer the Lord's call and to serve the Church with joy. God bless your family! 

### Umbert the Unborn



by Gary Cangemi

## Pieta Votive Candles



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

*Thank You & God Bless You, to everyone who made a financial gift in the 2014 calendar year to date.*

*We, the priests and brothers of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, extend our deep gratitude to all our benefactors. You are remembered in our prayers.*

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## PARISH SPOTLIGHT

### Saint Joseph Parish

Saint Joseph Church is a parish in Donna, Texas, served by three priests of the Missionaries of the Holy Family: Administrator Father Robert DeLong, M.S.F.; Father Eka Yuantoro, M.S.F.; Father Simon Brzozowski, M.S.F.



*God bless you, Father Robert, and your parish family at Saint Joseph Church!*



## THE POETRY CORNER



### *My Friend*

© Father James Wasser, M.S.F.

As I sit here this evening and ponder my day,  
My mind brings to view a Friend far away.  
Now I ask myself, as I adjust in my chair,  
Why does one love? Why does one care?

This Friend of mine who's far away,  
Enjoys her life every hour of the day.  
Working at length to heal and build trust,  
Knowing from her heart that her efforts are just.

Her name is My Friend; she is so very special to me!  
She's ready to listen, and she's ready to share.  
She's willing to cry, to challenge – even to dare.  
My Friend is not far away. For me, she's always there.

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