



# The Baltimore Beacon

The Redemptorists of the Baltimore Province

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Volume 3 // Issue 3 // 3.21.2022

## Provincial Ponderings



Dear Brothers and Sisters:

As I write this column during the first week of March, the senseless conflict in the Ukraine continues to rage on. When you finally read this column, I am not sure what the situation will be like at that moment, but I am sure we will still need to beseech our God for peace in our world and pray for those who have lost their lives, been injured, or in any way displaced by this insane action. We pray for peace that only the Lord can give. *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid”* (John 14: 27).

The Redemptorists of the Baltimore Province echo the words of Pope Francis that he offered during his General Audience remarks on Wednesday, February 23: *“I would like to appeal to those with political responsibility to examine their consciences seriously before God, who is the God of peace and not of war; who is the Father of all, not just of some, who wants us to*

*be brothers and not enemies. I pray that all the parties involved refrain from any action that would cause even more suffering to the people, destabilizing coexistence between nations and bringing international law into disrepute.”*

Our Redemptorist confreres in the Ukraine are remaining close to the people among whom they serve, and in fact, they are welcoming refugees into their homes and churches to share what they can with them. These refugees include children as well as older persons. Our Redemptorist confreres in Poland have declared their readiness to receive refugees.

Some have already welcomed the first of them, and one of our houses is reserved for children from a Ukrainian orphanage. Many people connected to our houses and parishes are also awaiting the arrival of the refugees.

While many USA organizations will be collecting to help the Ukraine, if any friends of the Redemptorists wish to make a donation specifically to help our Redemptorist confreres in the Ukraine, as well as our confreres in Poland dealing with the influx of refugees, those donations may be directed to our offices here in Washington, DC. All checks should be made out to: THE REDEMPTORISTS and include in the memo line: UKRAINE RELIEF and may be sent to: Fr. Paul Borowski; 3112 7th Street NE; Washington, DC 20017. Funds will be sent to our General Government in Rome who will make sure they go to the Redemptorists in the Ukraine.

Finally, I share with you the following

prayer that comes from Dunfermline Abbey (The Church of Scotland):

“God of our world in the bright light of day we feel the warm glow of our community, gathered to speak words of peace and longing for a world where equity and justice reign. In this moment we are all too aware of the privileges we feel. That from this place we will find shelter and comfort, and so we notice that this night there will be those who do not know safety, who will be hungry; those wanting to rest tired weary bones, or to have a quiet night.

“We pray for the people of Ukraine: those who will stay in their country to fight to protect their homes and the freedoms that they expect for their citizens; those who have made themselves homeless and rootless to protect the young and the vulnerable. We pray for broken hearts and broken families. We pray for the aggressors. We recognize that this may be one man’s war, or a government’s war, as we hear some voices oppose the choices made in their name, and cry out against the injustice, begging for the conflict to stop.

“We pray for those across the world who have been caught in conflict, and we make peace our ambition. May we become those who shape our lives so that peace reigns. Let us become more willing to value the differences our world provides, and learn to love those who challenge us, aware that we may be challenging to them. Amen.”

*In the Spirit of the Redeemer,  
Paul J. Borowski, C.Ss.R.*

## Upcoming 2022/2023 Dates

Monday, May 9 - Friday, May 20,  
2022 North American Conference  
Assembly & Phase 1 of the XXVI  
General Chapter at San Alfonso  
Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

Monday, May 16 - Friday, May 20,  
2022 North American Transition to  
Ministry Program at San Alfonso  
Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

Monday, May 23 - Friday, May 27,  
2022 North American Redemptorist  
Student Gathering at Redemptorist  
Retreat Center; Oconomowoc, WI

## Upcoming Dates, Continued

**Tuesday, May 31 - Thursday, June 2, 2022** Province Retreat at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

**Tuesday, July 5 - Thursday, July 7, 2022** A Summer Break “Coming Together as Confreres” at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

**Wednesday, July 6, 2022** Province Picnic at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

**Saturday, July 16, 2022 at 11 a.m.** Province Jubilee Celebration: Mass & Luncheon at Sacred Heart of Jesus; Baltimore, MD

**Saturday, July 23, 2022 at 10 a.m.** Priesthood Ordination for Brian Vaccaro, C.Ss.R., at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception; Washington, DC. Bishop

Michael Burbidge (Arlington, VA) is the ordaining Bishop

**Saturday, August 13, 2022 at 11 a.m.** Priesthood Ordination for Royce Thomas, C.Ss.R. at St Anthony’s; Guapo Cap-de-Ville Main Rd; Point Fortin, Trinidad. Archbishop Charles Jason Gordon (Port of Spain, Trinidad) is the ordaining Bishop

**Monday, August 15, 2022** Convoking of the XVIII Provincial Chapter

**Sunday, September 11 - Friday, October 7, 2022** Phase 2 (Canonical Phase) of XXVI General Chapter; Rome, Italy

**Tuesday, November 29 – Thursday, December 1, 2022** Province Convocation at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

*(Tuesday, November 29, 2022 will be Provincial Candidates Day)*

**Monday, February 13 - Wednesday, February 15, 2023** Province Retreat (Southeast Region) at St. Alphonsus Villa; New Smyrna Beach, FL

**Thursday, February 16, 2023** Province Jubilee Celebration (Southeast Region)

**Monday, March 13 – Friday, March 17, 2023 and if necessary Monday, March 20 – Friday, March 24, 2023** XVIII Baltimore Provincial Chapter at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

**Tuesday, May 30 - Thursday, June 1, 2023** Province Retreat at San Alfonso Retreat House; Long Branch, NJ

## Communications Updates

• Daily Audio Podcasts on the readings of the day may be found at [redemptorists.net](http://redemptorists.net) in either Spanish or English.

• Weekly Video reflections on the upcoming Sunday readings (Cycle C)

may be found on Facebook: [facebook.com/RedemptoristsBaltimore](https://facebook.com/RedemptoristsBaltimore) or YouTube: [youtube.com/BaltRedemptorists](https://youtube.com/BaltRedemptorists). These videos are released each Wednesday.

• Saturday, April 23: On-line video

service “Praying with the Icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help.”

• **Please note:** There will be *no* OLPH Video Service in March and the Video Service in April will be on the *fourth* Saturday.

## Upcoming EPC Meetings

Future EPC meetings will begin at 9:30 a.m. via ZOOM until further notice

- March 23rd – 24th, 2022
- April 27th – 28th, 2022

- **No May Meeting**
- June 15th – 16th, 2022
- July 6th, 2022 (San Alfonso; Long Branch, NJ)
- **No August Meeting**

- September 7th – 8th
- October 19th – 20th
- November 16th – 17th
- December 2nd (San Alfonso; Long Branch, NJ)

## Upcoming Missions, Retreats, and Video Series

• **March 23-27**, Lenten Mission at St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Greensboro, NC, Peter Linh

• **March 25 at 7:30 p.m.**, Lenten Evening of Reflection at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish,

Mountainside, NJ, “Prayer in the Alphonsian Tradition,” Dennis Billy

## Upcoming Dates, Continued

- **March 26-March 30**, St. John Neumann Catholic Church, Charlotte, NC, Kevin MacDonald,
- **March 26-30**, Parish Mission: “Walking in the Dark, Living in the Light of Christ,” St. Anne Catholic Church, Beaumont, TX, James Wallace, Francis Gargani, Phil Dabney
- **March 31- April 3**, Lenten Mission at Vietnamese Martyrs Parish, Tukwila, WA, Peter Linh
- **April 2-6**, St. Lawrence the Martyr Catholic Church, Redondo Beach, CA, Kevin MacDonald
- **April 3-6**, Parish Mission: “Walking in the Darkness, Living in the Light of Christ,” St. Jerome Catholic Church, Weymouth, MA, James Wallace, Francis Gargani, Phil Dabney
- **April 6-8**, Lenten Mission at Our Lady of Lourdes, Seattle, WA, Peter Linh
- **April 9**, Day of Reflection and Prayer: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Villa Pauline Retreat and Spiritual Center, Mendham, NJ, The Paschal Triduum: Celebrating our Identity and Agenda as a Church of Missionary Disciples, James Wallace
- **April 13-17**, Holy Week Retreat at Mariandale Retreat and Conference Center, Ossining, NY, Francis Gargani with Staff of the Center
- **April 23-27**, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Erie, PA, Kevin MacDonald
- **April 29-May 3**, Parish Mission Theme: “Preaching to the Hungers of the Heart,” Nativity at St. Leo Church, Tully, NY, James Wallace, Francis Gargani, Phil Dabney
- **April 30-May 4**, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Osceola Mills, PA, Kevin MacDonald
- **May 21-25**, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Cornwall, PA, Kevin MacDonald
- **June 11-15**, St. Patrick Catholic Church, Pasco, WA, Kevin MacDonald
- **July 5-7**, Retreat to the Trinitarians at their Provincial Headquarters in Baltimore, MD, Kevin MacDonald
- **July 9-13**, Parish mission at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in West Harwich, MA, Kevin MacDonald,
- **August 26-29**, Retreat to Redemptorist seminarians at San Alfonso in Long Branch, NJ, Kevin MacDonald

## Interview with P. Talaveras, C.Ss.R., Sacred Heart of Jesus, Baltimore, MD

At the end of January 2022 until the beginning of March 2022, Fr. Alipio Flores, C.Ss.R., Associate Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Baltimore, went on vacation to his home country, Bolivia. During his time away, the Redemptorist Community and Parishes of Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Patrick welcomed Padre Carlos Hernández Talaveras, C.Ss.R., of the Province of Mexico. Besides helping us in the sacramental life of the church, Padre Carlos has also brought dynamism and fraternal warmth to our community.

**P. Carlos any opening words for our readers?** To all the assiduous readers of this beautiful magazine, I greet you

fraternally in Christ the Redeemer, Mary, Our Mother and Perpetual Help, and in Our Holy Founder, St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori. Thank you for reading this magazine and for being part of the Redemptorist family.

**Who are you and what Redemptorist Community do you belong to in Mexico?** I am Father Carlos Hernández Talaveras and I am part of the Mexican Redemptorist Province. My current community is Santa Anita in the city of Irapuato, Guanajuato in central Mexico.

**What year were you professed?** I made my Religious Profession on

August 4, 1974. We were a small group of five. Three years later, three were admitted into Final Profession. Since then, we go where the Lord wants.

**When were you ordained?** I was ordained at the hands of Cardinal Monsignor José Salazar López on September 30, 1978 at the Redemptorist community of “Santisimo Redentor” in Guadalajara, Jalisco.

**What was your experience like after being ordained as Redemptorist priest?** Three days after being ordained and having no vacation, I joined my first community called “Santa Anita” in

*Interview with P. Carlos, continued on pg. 6*



P. Carlos  
pictured  
above and  
below with  
parishioners.

Irapuato. There I started my pastoral, apostolic, and missionary work. It was also there that the Provincial Government asked me to start a minor seminary. It worked for two years until I moved to another community. None of the young men made it to Ordination but a few did enter the Novitiate.

My first change of community led me to the Minor Seminary in San Luis Potosí. I was a teacher, prefect of discipline, and a psychology student at the university there. I previously started studies in Guanajuato but because I moved, I attempted to continue studies at the University of Potosí.

I was then sent to the community of Monterrey. Finally, I was able to finish my degree in psychology. As I followed my own schedule of studies, I was able to take the subjects that I was missing according to my needs without neglecting my community duties. This was the condition under which I was given permission to finish the degree. Thanks be to God and the support of my brothers in the

community, I was able to complete studies, do an internship at the psychiatric hospital, teach classes at the same university, and do a postgraduate degree.

I was then moved to the community of Perpetual Help in the city of Torreón, Coahuila. There I started as a full-time missionary. I also developed my passion and sense of being a Redemptorist. I returned to the community of Irapuato which had been my first community. I

was the Superior and Coordinator of Missionary work of the Province. Later on, I was asked to continue as Coordinator of the Missionary Work but to do it more justice, I asked to be relieved of the position of Superior.

As Missions Coordinator, my base was in Guadalajara, Distrito Federal in the community of Santísima. I continued in the missions but at the same time I was responsible for communities in Monterrey and Obregon. I then had a little break and was reappointed as superior in Irapuato and Guadalajara. I demitted the office of Superior in 2018 and was then asked to coordinate missions with headquarters in Puebla.

As we can see, the life of a missionary is ever-changing. You come and go but at times you may return to a place. This is evident in the countless times that I have belonged to the Irapuato Community, even when I was a novice.

In 2020, we closed the missionary work in Sierra de Puebla and started a new mission in Sierra Gorda de Querétaro. Two days before finishing the first stage of the mission, the

Parish Priest who had requested the mission, told all the missionaries that the mission was suspended due to the pandemic. We returned to the parish headquarters to say good bye until further notice. Again, I was sent back to Irapuato because of its proximity to the now-closed mission. This was done in case something was needed at the mission. I am still in that community but then was asked to serve temporarily in this beautiful Baltimore Community.

In my humble opinion, I not only say but affirm that the Redemptorist life must respond to the reality that God, our Father, is putting before us. We all know the growing pains in our world due to the loss of a value for life, love, and peace, in addition to the increasing distance between nature and humanity. What can we not say about humanity's unfettered desire to rule the world in which one consistently seeks to place self above God?

**What are the qualities of today's and future Redemptorists?** The future Redemptorists have to continue cultivating many qualities, without which it is impossible to work in the world today. The golden trait of Constitution 20 "Strong in faith, rejoicing in hope, burning with charity, on fire with zeal, in humility of heart and persevering in prayer" guides us to recover authenticity in prayer and be concrete in deep discernment in addition to living the pastoral sensitivity. This is one piece of the multiple and complex identity which the future Redemptorists must hone.

Finally, I end by remembering two unforgettable experiences as a priest: being a priest and a university student at the same time and as a missionary, in various places with its ups and downs and its ever increasing depth.

*Interview by Ako Walker, C.Ss.R.*

## Updates from Immaculate Conception Parish, Bronx, NY



Front of Immaculate Conception Parish, Bronx, NY

During the past two years, like churches around the world, we in Immaculate Conception Parish in the South Bronx, New York have had to adjust our ministry. We have become accustomed to having meetings, religious education classes for adults, teens, and children, youth group gatherings, prayer moments, and many other events online. During this pandemic we have found that the internet is a valuable tool.

As much as we appreciate the internet, our parishioners long for the good old days when the vast majority of ministry was done in person and we were able to meet socially. These days are slowly but surely arriving. During March most of our meetings, all our religious education programs, our youth gatherings, and prayer moments will be in person. There are even tentative and cautious plans afoot to have a social event on Mother's Day.

During this very difficult time several organizations have used our facilities

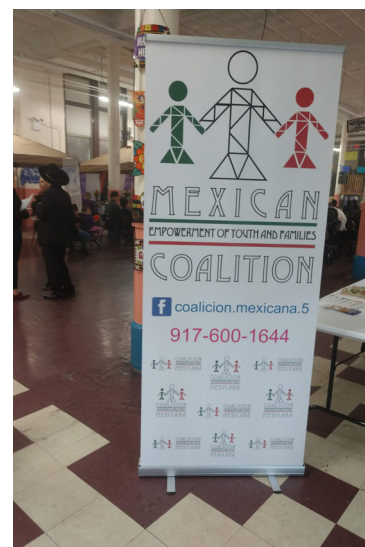
to provide much needed services to the community: Hispanic Star - products for cleaning and personal hygiene; Catholic Charities - food and financial assistance; Somos and New York Presbyterian Hospital - Covid 19 testing and vaccines; and especially the Mexican Coalition, who, along with their regular immigration work, now run a regular food pantry and clothing distribution center in the Parish. They also provide a link to so many needed services. If they do not provide the service themselves, they will surely find out who does.

We are very happy to announce that the Mexican Coalition will be renting a rather large vacant convent from Immaculate Conception Church in the coming months. The convent is located right next to the church. With the added space they will be able to expand their services to the community. We as a church will also be able to assist them in their expansion and increase our cooperation with them in their many beneficial programs. We pray and hope that this will be a long and fruitful



Front of Emmanuel House, Bronx, NY

relationship for both the Coalition and Immaculate Conception Church.



Mexican Coalition is a huge resource for the community.

During the pandemic, Immaculate Conception School has continued to provide a wonderful education to 423 children in our community. Since September all classes have been in person with very few setbacks related to the pandemic. Like the rest of us the students, staff, and parents are looking forward to more normal times.

In August of last year, we added two new members of our community - Rev. Charles Hergenroeder, C.Ss.R., and Br. Augustus Riviere, C.Ss.R. Fr. Charles is stationed here for the parish and has been nourishing the people with his insightful homilies and classes in our adult formation programs. Br. Augustus is a student in the society and ethics program at Fordham University. His primary focus is environmental intersectionality. He will be providing a much-needed ministry in this area in the future. Presently he also assists in the adult formation programs.

*Sean McGillicuddy, C.Ss.R.*

## OLPH Retreat and Spirituality Center, Venice, FL



Bishop Dewane and spiritual directors of OLPH pictured above.  
Logo pictured below.



On February 19, 2022, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Retreat and Spirituality Center in Venice, FL held their 25th anniversary celebration. At the celebration Bishop Frank

Dewane recalled the contributions of Father Charles Mallen, C.Ss.R., and all the Redemptorists who ministered at the Retreat House. Father Peter Sousa, the last Redemptorist to serve at the center represented the Redemptorists. He, along with Sister Carmella DeCosty, SNJM, Carmelite Father JJ McCarthy, and various members of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary who currently staff the center were able to join in the silver anniversary celebrations.

In the mid 1980's, Bishop Nevins, the first bishop of the diocese of Venice in Florida asked Father Mallen if he would build a retreat house for the Diocese of Venice. Fr. Charlie, with the OK of the Vice Provincial moved from Miami to Venice. With God's grace and the help of many of individuals, especially Sister Carmella DeCosty, SNJM, Father Charlie built the "Miracle on the Myakka," Our Lady of Perpetual Retreat and Spirituality Center. The retreat center began operations in 1996 and for the next 10 years Fr. Mallen, with the part time assistance of a few confreres, directed retreats, Cursillo weekends, and days of prayer. In September 2006, Fr. Sousa was assigned to assist Fr. Charlie who completed his work at OLPH in September 2007 with his assignment to the St. John Neumann Residence in Saratoga Springs. Father Sousa continued the ministry until August 2008 when the Redemptorists relinquished the ministry to the Diocese. It was wonderful to see this Redemptorist retreat ministry continuing and being supported by Bishop Dewane and the Oblates of the Virgin Mary.

For more information on the event <https://dioceseofvenice.org/retreat-center-celebrates-quarter-century/>

*Peter Sousa, C.Ss.R.*

*Photos courtesy of Mr. Bob Reddy, Diocese of Venice in Florida*

## Diaconate Experience, Royce Thomas, C.Ss.R.

I arrived in Dominica on January 31 for my first assignment in full-time ministry as a professed Redemptorist and ordained Deacon.

The Redemptorists community and parishes we serve were warm and welcoming, making the transition extremely pleasant. I am learning and

experiencing the culture and history of the parishes and country through friendly interactions and conversations

## Diaconate Experience, Continued



Deacon Royce Thomas preaching the second night of the Lenten Mission at St. Anne Parish.

with the people of God.

Being flexible in religious life was a topic discussed at length during my time in the theologate. I recall these discussions during this time in my journey and remain open to what God is doing. After the first few weeks, I

discovered that I had to adjust my expectations about ministry. I envisioned having a schedule that would be more demanding and exacting.

However, I am learning that this is not my current reality. Nonetheless, I am grateful for having received the ministry of deacon and acceptance of perpetual vows in the congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, praying continuously for the grace to say, “your will be done, O Lord.”

My experience of being a deacon thus far has been one of being present and occasionally preaching at daily and weekend masses, serving at a funeral mass, performing baptisms on one weekend, and completing odd house errands.

Thankfully, and excitedly, I look forward to preaching three Lenten parish missions/retreats during the month of March. Also, I will be assisting Fr. Joseph Hung Duc Tran, C.Ss.R., and the parish of St. Joseph as it resumes its soup kitchen on Thursdays. A former parish priest started the soup kitchen initiative, the late Fr. Jacky Merilan, C.Ss.R.

*Royce Thomas, C.Ss.R.*

## Partners in Mission at St. James the Greater Church, Concord, NC



St. James the Greater Church Partners in Mission gathering pictured.

Our Redemptorist family on mission to our wounded world continues to grow daily, and parish by parish.

God said, “Let it be and so it happened.” Partners in Mission is happening!

Micki O’Connor shared the following about Partners in Mission at St. James the Greater Church:

### What being part of PIM means to me:

I never knew who or what a Redemptorist was. I grew up in the Cleveland, OH diocese and attended schools and churches run by diocesan priests, sisters of St. Joseph, and the Notre Dame nuns. My first exposure to the Redemptorists happened in 1997 when I moved to Concord,

NC and joined St. James the Greater Catholic Church under the pastorship of the Redemptorists. I heard their motto “With Him is plentiful Redemption” and I knew I had found my home parish.

I became a Redemptorist Associate in late fall of 2018 after a planning weekend spent with ordained Redemptorists and laity in Oconomowoc, WI. Since then, my prayer life has become more meaningful as have the many volunteer activities I am active in. While being an associate hasn’t caused me to take on more, I now do things with a different sense of spirituality. I have learned (but not yet mastered) how to “follow” Jesus with my heart and not just my actions. Utilizing the many online resources available, joining PIM zoom calls, reading the newsletter, and talking with ordained and lay members of the Redemptorist family,

*Partners in Mission, continued on pg. 10*



I find myself trying hard not to do things that please me but to do things that result more in a common good. I concentrate more now on inclusion and not exclusion. I find myself more compassionate, less judgmental, and all around a happier, more joyful follower of Jesus. I am learning to talk in a more loving way to others and to freely talk about the love of Jesus and the mercy of God. This has proven very beneficial with my work in parish faith

formation as a catechist for both youth and adult formation. I have developed a more personal relationship with our mother, Mary and especially to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Attending our weekly OLPH novena mass is truly a highlight in my week.

I am excited that we are starting to be a bit more active here in the southeast in growing our group. We are taking baby steps and will begin with more

instruction on and dialogue about the four pillars of the congregation (crib, cross, Eucharist and Mary). I am blessed to be working side by side with members of the Redemptorist ordained and members of our parish as we begin to grow and help to spread the good news.

*Glenn Parker, C.Ss.R.*

## St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Sandy Bay Update



The rebuilding continues with work in preparation for the construction of a new roof on the Church building in Sandy Bay.

## Southeastern Retreat and Jubilee Celebration

In February of 2020 we gathered at St. Alphonsus Villa in New Smyrna Beach, FL for the annual Southeastern Retreat and Jubilee Celebration. At that time none of us knew it would be the last major face-to-face gathering of confreres for several years. This year, the week of February 21st saw us return to the hospitable confines of the Villa for the first large in-person gathering of confreres since that last gathering in 2020.

It was good to be together as we gathered to listen to the insights and stories of Amado Picardal, C.Ss.R., (Province of Cebu, Philippines now living and working in Rome). While we enjoyed the times of common prayer, retreat talks and discussion it was also the pleasure of sunshine and warm weather that lifted our spirits. Fr. Amado ("Picx") will present the same retreat at Long Branch, NJ from May 31st to June 2nd this year.

Most of the confreres from the Southeastern part of the Province were present, as well as a few Yankees from the North. Sharing conversation and meals with one another and with the residents of the Villa was an indication that the dark days of the pandemic may be in our rear view mirror now.

A few highlights included prayer and celebration. One night we gathered

*Southeastern Retreat, continued on pg. 11*

for a prayer service in the House Chapel where we remembered all our confreres who have died in the last two years. It was very moving. As each of their names were read, a bell tolled, and a lit candle was placed on the altar in their memory. Recalling the list of our deceased confreres brought a tear to a few eyes and a sting of sadness to our hearts. While we mourned those who had gone before us, we gathered on the last day of our week together to celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving for all those celebrating anniversaries. Fr. Al Riquelme (25 years ordained) was the main celebrant and Fr. Michael Koncick (40 years ordained) was the homilist. A festive dinner at Sugar Mill Country Club ended the

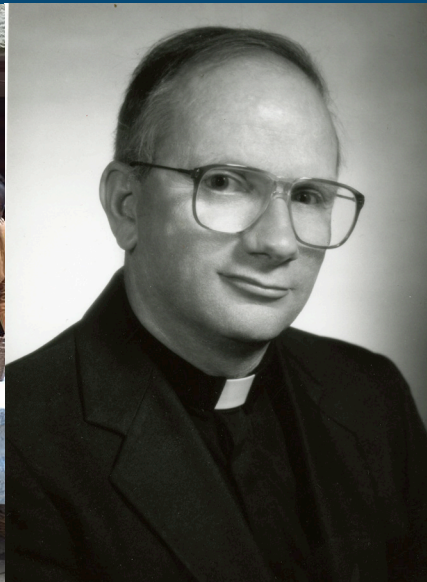
evening with much laughter, storytelling, and fellowship.

We look forward to once again gathering as brothers to pray, recreate, and celebrate to strengthen our bonds as brothers!

*Paul Borowski, C.Ss.R.*



## In Memoriam: Father John Lavin, C.Ss.R.



Acts by St. Luke. Luke's book is almost all about St. Paul and his long years of ministry in the Mediterranean Basin and Fr. John's book is all about his 40 years in Hispanic ministry.

St. Paul and John even begin their ministry the same way. Both were headed in one direction and God sent them on a completely different path. Paul was going to Damascus to capture Christians to bring back to Jerusalem and John was set on getting a Master's Degree in Education until his Vice-Provincial (which I was at the time) suggested, knowing his real interest and love, that it would be better for him, not to go to Boston, or wherever, but to go to Medellin, Colombia where the Latin American Bishops had set up a Pastoral Center to prepare their missionaries to deal with the pastoral reality of Latin America. So, ever obedient, off John went in 1974 on the journey that shaped his life.

John was an excellent student in the seminary and all his life. Not only did he have a fine mind, but his heart was in it. He put faces on everything he learned, and he loved these people, especially the poor and needy. And he also formed



Fr. John wrote a book, "Recognizing Lazarus at our Door" which had as its subtitle, "Reflections of a Priest with Forty Years in Hispanic Ministry." And if you read the book, you could easily say, "I read this before," And in a sense you did because it reads so much like the book of

## In Memoriam, Continued

life-long friendships with his mentors, some of the greatest scholars and apostles in Latin America at that time, the Chilean Theologian, Segundo Galilea, and Gustavo Gutierrez from Peru, the father of Liberation Theology, and Jose Marins from Brazil who taught him how to organize a parish into a “community of small Christian communities” (CEB, “Comunidades Ecclesiales de Base). Marins was considered the father of this pastoral approach.

In 1975, John returned to Boston to attend to a personal matter, but it had always been in his mind to learn about the pastoral reality of Latin America so that he could minister to the thousands of “Latinos” that he encountered in the States, in places like Boston, New York, Baltimore, Annapolis, and again in Boston. He brought the wealth of his knowledge from Puerto Rico and Columbia north and shared it generously with the people he loved.

Boston had also another blessing for him. He worked for a while at the “Alianza

Hispana” a multi-service center for Hispanics. But most of all he got to meet and admire Fr. Ed McDonough, the “Healing Priest” who had a similar history of working for the poor, first among the African Americans in the South and then in the “Irish Getto” of Roxbury. He, like John, also continued his studies and earned a master’s degree in Sociology at Boston College to help him in his ministry. Also in Boston, John was reunited with Fr. Vincent Kelly, a remarkable parish priest whom he likened to Father O’Malley, the role that Bing Crosby played in “Going my Way.” Both these priests, and others, had a great influence of John. They showed him how a priest could make a real difference, socially and religiously, in the reality in which they lived and served with love.

As I say, John’s book is like the book of Acts and tells of his time in the “Barriada Morales” in the poor section of Caguas, Puerto Rico, of his time in Latin America where he met his “mentors.” And then in St. Cecilia’s, New York and as rector in St. Michael’s in Baltimore and later as parish priest in Annapolis, Maryland, and finally

back home to Boston. In between, like St. Paul, he made his missionary journeys all over the United States with Fr. George Drew, as a Parish Missionary. All the time his aim was to find and nourish basic Christian communities. And at the same time, he never stopped learning about nor loving those for whom he gave of himself so generously.

His book tells of his insights into many different pastoral realities that he encountered in his 40 years and tells of his dedication to the people he served and loved. He was a true follower of St. Alphonsus and rightly deserves the reward in heaven that the Saint promised to all his followers. May John’s spirit live forever among us all.

*Tom Travers, C.Ss.R.*

*Happy to have been God’s instrument who knocked John off his horse heading to academic scholarship and set him on the path of a missionary that he walked so well for the good of our Latin brothers and sisters especially the poor and abandoned.*



Redemptorists of the Baltimore Province  
Holy Redeemer  
3112 7th St NE  
Washington, DC 20017