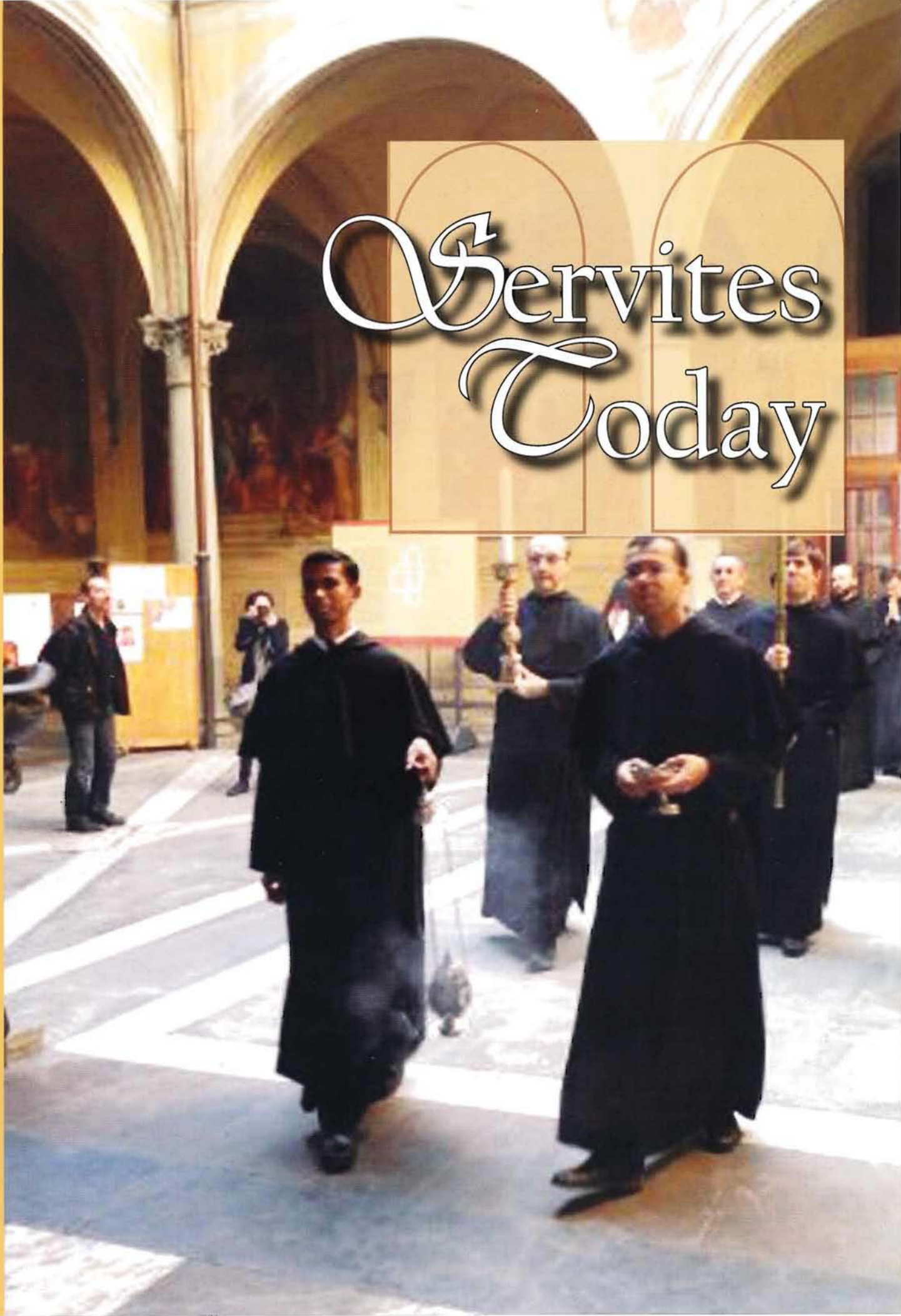


Servites Today





"The Order of Friar Servants of Mary is a community of men gathered together in the name of Jesus the Lord. Moved by the Spirit, we commit ourselves, as did our First Fathers, to witness the gospel in fraternal communion and to be at the service of God and all people, drawing abiding inspiration from Mary, Mother and Servant of the Lord. "

Servite Constitutions, #1

When you write or review your will, please consider making a charitable bequest. Your bequest to the Servants of Mary will help us spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin; serve the Church in parishes, schools, hospitals, and foreign missions; train future priests and brothers; and provide for the elderly religious. Your charity will be a lasting memorial that will grow and prosper in the minds and hearts of all who are touched by the work of the Servants of Mary.

For more information, please contact Fr. Lawrence at the Servite Development Office: 1439 South Harlem Avenue, Berwyn, IL 60402, 708-795-8885 or visit www.servite.org (the Gifts/Giftshop link).

From the Editor

In the Catholic world, when one speaks of vocation it is usually in reference to the priesthood or religious life. Today, we also hear of the married vocation and the single vocation, or people "called" to a particular career. And yet at baptism, all Christians receive the same vocation: the call to be holy.

"But you are a chosen race, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a people to be a personal possession to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were a non-people and now you are the People of God; once you were outside his pity; now you have received pity." 1 Peter 2: 9-10

The difference lies in the paths chosen to fulfill that call. Some will find it marriage, others in remaining single, still others as religious men and women, as deacons and as priests. All receive the same baptismal call.

It is the same in Servite life. There are different paths to being "Servite." There are priests and friars. There are contemplative nuns and active sisters. There are consecrated singles and Secular Order members. There is the lay diakonia, of which three families will profess their Promise this September in Wisconsin. There are also those of you who do not actively join but feel called to support the Servites with gifts and prayers. You are also "Servites" and we continue to thank and pray for you.

All the stories in this issue revolve around this theme of vocation. A newly professed friar reflects on his Servite vocation as does a young man in the very early stages of fulfilling his call. Fr. Michael Pontarelli, O.S.M., offers a meditation on the meaning of vocation, and finally, we introduce the new Servite Vocation ministers.

No matter the paths each of us individually chooses, what binds us together is our common search for God and holiness in Christ.

"Holiness is not a luxury, a privilege of the few; something impossible for ordinary people, but is instead the normal vocation of all those who are baptized." Benedict XVI

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James Foerster, Editor

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Cover photo: procession at SS. Annunziata, Florence, Italy, 2011.

SERVITE PROFESSION IN SOUTH AFRICA

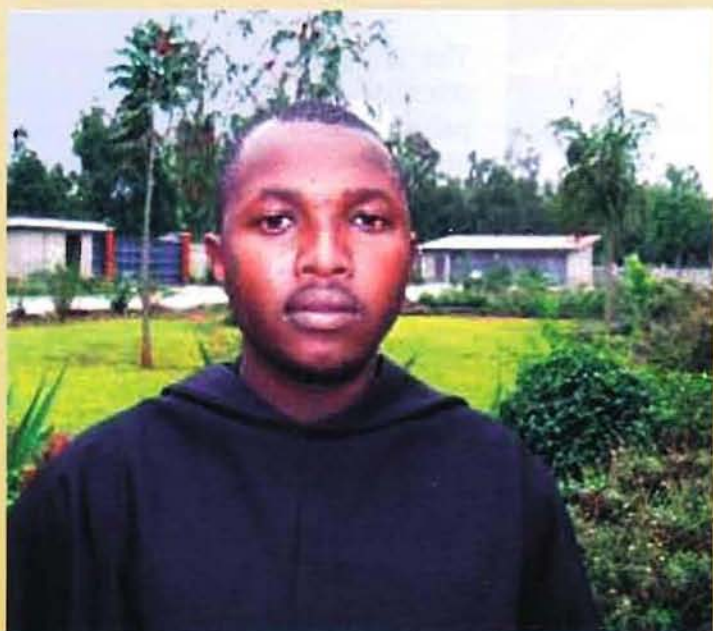
Bro. Sifiso M. Mchunu, O.S.M., of the Province's Zululand Delegation, professed his solemn vows on Sunday, May 26, 2012. The celebration took place at Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish in the Vicariate of Ingwavuma. Fr. John Fontana, Prior Provincial of the USA Province received the solemn vows along with Fr. Mel Loftus, the Provincial Delegate and Pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish. Bishop Jose Luis Ponce de Leon, the bishop of the Vicariate was also present. Fellow Servites from the Vicariate and Servite friars and sisters from Swaziland attended the celebration as well as diocesan priests and other religious congregations from the Vicariate and beyond.

When asked about his Servite vocation, Bro. Sifiso answered, "For me, being a Servite means to be available to serve. This service begins in the community where I am assigned and it extends to the whole Church and the world. On the day of my solemn profession, Bishop Jose of the Vicariate Apostolic of Ingwavuma stated that I should be a servant just as other Servite friars should. I was very happy with his words because that idea has always been in my mind. I always believe that my availability to serve implies giving life to the people of God. The little things that I say or do to people I encounter daily should not destroy them but give them life; they should be able to feel their burden lightened after they have encountered Christ who lives in me. If not, then my vocation is worthless. This is a challenge that I am always struggling to face and overcome. St. Paul said, 'It is no longer I who lives but Christ lives in me.' The life that I should give should not be mine or



from me but the life of Christ. Therefore, I need the life of Christ in order to give it to others. I cannot give what I do not have!

My idea is that any kind of service I am able to offer to the Order and to the Church should not be for my own glory but God's glory. It is for that reason why I believe in collaboration. In my vocation as a Servite, it does not matter much what I am able to achieve but what we are able to achieve. I am influenced by one saying which goes "if you want to reach fast, go alone but if you want to reach far, go with others." I have two role models as a Servite friar. The first one is the Blessed Virgin Mary who always said yes to the Will of God, and the second one is St. Anthony Pucci who gave his whole life to the people that he served. It is my prayer and wish to be as they were, and that makes my vocation more unique. Can that be easy? Of course not, but it is a life struggle that is worth it."



Top: Thabani Msane, Thaniso Masinga, Fr. Charles Toland, OSM, Ayanda Tembe, Fr. Mafanisa Mthembu, OSM, Fr. Thulani Ntsele, OSM, and Bro. Sifiso Mchunu, OSM, at Star of the Sea Priory, Kwa-Ngwanase, South Africa.

Bottom: Bro Sifiso Mchunu, OSM, lying prostrate during his solemn profession.

Called *to be Servants*



From the beginning God has chosen not only ordinary people but even unlikely ones to announce His Good News of redemption. Noah had a drinking problem, Moses we know stammered, Jeremiah protested he was too young, Peter was chosen by Jesus, not Donald Trump, as an apprentice and leader, and Holy Mary was both a maiden and “from the hill-country.”

Until otherwise contested, I will contend that the Annunciation was an important feast for our Seven Founders. It’s certainly been important for me as I reflect on the role of Mary and a vocation to the (Friar) Servants of Mary. Being somewhat skeptical I doubt she was as composed as Renaissance painters portray her. Can you imagine being visited by an angel?

And can you imagine being called, by God, to participate directly and immediately in His plan for salvation? That’s exactly what religious vocation means: realizing that God is announcing that YOU have a role in the mystery of salvation. Faith is an experience of God and like all experiences it demands reflection to be defined and brought to action. So, how will you go out and make your faith public? As God chose people in ancient times, so He continues to do in current times. Trouble is, as it has always been; God’s announcement has a positive “YES, I WILL SERVE YOU” or a “NO, I WON’T” negative response.

What if Mary were to have said: “Hmm, please leave me alone. I know it sounds strange; I just enjoy praying, but I don’t want your

“WOW”
yes, Lord



intrusion in my life. I am young and have a lot of living ahead of me. Besides, I am only ordinary, a nobody really. I’m neither educated nor a person of high society and your whole plan seems rather, well strange, weird, and I just don’t want to commit my life to it. You see, I want to have wealth, power, and pleasure.” Mary knew that God’s plan was bigger than what the world

could offer, she acted believing God’s announcement: If God said she was filled with grace and would give Creation a new beginning it must be true.

God’s Super-nature is always announcing that life-in-abundance is right before our eyes. We are the ones who shove back saying: “Please, I just say my prayers; now you go pick on someone who has brains, good looks, and at least the possibility of power and position.” Our vocation is responding to the announcement: “I am choosing you to glorify Me and My Son. I need you no matter who you might be in-the-world, I am announcing to you that you must announce to all of creation that the Kingdom of God is at hand.” Together, the Original Seven were empowered as they responded to the announcement they heard. As they were, they found an example in the Virgin and encouragement from each other. They drew inspiration from Mary to be at the service of God and all people.

The announcement was heard by scientists, teachers, preachers, painters and musicians, community organizers, and gang members. They responded and became saints in the Order of Servants of Mary. They heard the announcement and recognized what joy could mean if they lived as a Servant. The announcement is being made today to you. Can YOU imagine being called by God to participate in His plan? Hear what God is announcing to you. Let your response be: WOW, yes Lord, I have come to serve.

- Fr. Michael Pontarelli, OSM



People often ask me, “Why did you want to become a priest?” or “What made you decide to join a religious order?” These questions make me wonder if they are expecting me to tell them that a light shone on me and I fell off the horse like Saint Paul. Or like Samuel who heard the voice of God calling his name in the middle of the night. Or like Moses to whom God spoke from a burning bush. Unfortunately God didn’t call me in any of these dramatic and supernatural ways. But I believe the way he did call me was just as significant.

A long time ago he gently touched my heart and in the quiet there he said, “Come, Anthony, follow me.” The words were not so much spoken but experienced as a desire that was planted when I heard the word of God in the scriptures: “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”

My life presented many obstacles since I am the only son of my parents and I come from an Indo-Fijian culture where the sons are supposed to take care of the parents. And as if that wasn’t enough, my only sister has chronic myeloid leukemia. I don’t think that our Lord said to anyone: “Follow me and I will make all your problems disappear.” After I finished my studies in Electronics Engineering I worked for three years but nothing in my life was

making sense. Being a priest was always in the back of my head from childhood to the present.

Joining a religious order was not a rash decision. When I was small I knew of just one order but as I grew older I began to experience the diversity of religious orders and their particular charisms. A couple of years ago I looked around and did research on some of the religious orders that might be suitable for me, paying special attention to the Marian orders. I was quite taken by the Servants of Mary simply because of the name which I found marvelous. The charisms of fraternity, service, and Mary were an added bonus. I first visited the Servites about three years ago while I was visiting my aunts in Sydney and formally entered at the beginning of last year.

Life continues to present many challenges on a day-to-day basis but I am glad that I have decided to give it a go and placed my life in the hands of our Lord through Mary. My single goal is that I will be able to fulfill the purpose for which I was born through the help of God whether as a priest or any other vocation he chooses for me. But I do know one thing for certain: that AT THIS very moment I am meant to be here so that I may be molded and formed by Our Mother in the best possible way to fulfill what God has in store for me.

Anthony’s Story

Anthony Sebastian, from Fiji, is a pre-novice who entered the Servite formation program at Seven Holy Founders Priory in Parkville (Melbourne), Australia.

MEET THE NEW VOCATION MINISTERS

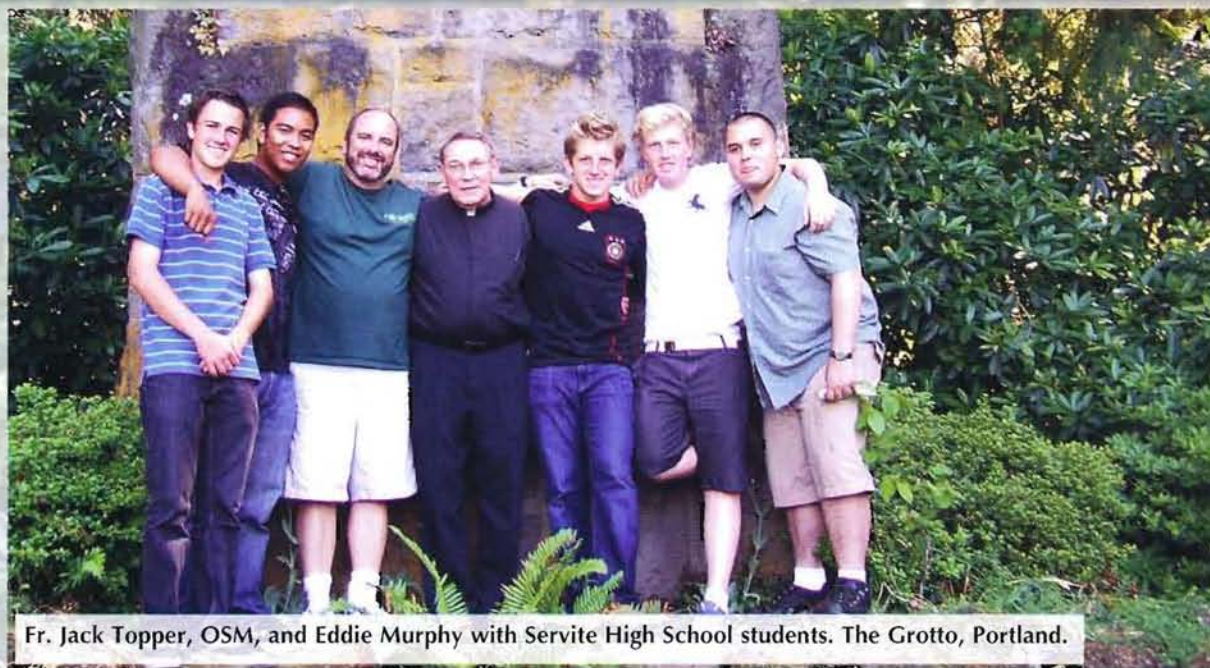
Everyone has a particular path to follow in life. But finding the right path is not an easy process. It takes time, prayer, openness, and the courage to take risks. It is also important to have someone who can be trusted, who can listen, and who is willing to walk the road with you. The Friar Servants of Mary, USA Province is pleased to introduce our new vocation ministers, Fr. Jack Topper, O.S.M., and Mr. Eddie Murphy.

Fr. Jack Topper, O.S.M., is probably most recognizable as the Director of the The Grotto in Portland, which has been featured in these pages numerous times. A native of Chicago, Fr. Jack entered the Order in 1982 following a career in education. After serving as an Associate Pastor at various Servite Parishes and teaching for a year at Servite High School in Anaheim, CA, Fr. Jack was appointed Director of The Grotto, a position he has held for 21 years! "I have no magic but I do have a desire for us Servites to continue to minister in a way that is unique to our charism. This is a very challenging ministry to which many of our friars have given years of service. I want to thank them for their work and want to continue what they have done in the past years," he says. "In a sense, I see this as a time for a new start with an open mind to new possibilities and ways of ministering. Most of all I know that we need the support and help of all our friars and the entire Servite family if we have any hope to succeed. I think that each of us friars and the entire Servite family needs to ask 'What can I do?' Pray, listen, encourage and invite." Fr.

Jack is also looking forward to ministering with Eddie Murphy who has for a number of years shown a great deal of enthusiasm and eagerness in promoting Servite vocations.

Mr. Edward (Eddie) Murphy comes to us from Servite High School, Anaheim, where he works in the campus ministry department. Eddie joined the Servite High School staff in 2007 after serving as Youth Minister at St. Martin de Porres Parish in Yorba Linda, CA, as well as twenty-two years as an employee at Disneyland. At Servite, he runs the very successful Kairos Retreat program where students, leading each other, come to an understanding of self and relationship to God and others. Eddie's excitement about this new and closer working relationship with the Servites centers around the friars: "It's the friars themselves, to hear their stories. The history of the Order is one thing, laypeople coming together to form an order, but the friars' personal stories are great. I want the younger guys to hear this." Showing the youth of today that it is possible for a group of men from diverse backgrounds to come together and form a common, holy life is one aspect of vocation work that Eddie is looking forward to: "This is one aspect of the Church that gets lost and one aspect that they should know about."

Those interested in Servite Vocations can email at vocations@ServitesUSA.org or visit www.servite.org and the Order of Friar Servants of Mary Vocations facebook page.



Fr. Jack Topper, OSM, and Eddie Murphy with Servite High School students. The Grotto, Portland.



US PROVINCE JUBILARIANS



Fr. Philip Scherer, O.S.M.
60 Years Solemn Profession
September 21, 2012



Fr. Philip McGlynn, O.S.M.
50 Years Solemn Profession
September 16, 2012



Fr. Patrick Donovan, O.S.M.
60 Years Solemn Profession
September 21, 2012



Fr. David Brown, O.S.M.
65 Years Solemn Profession
September 21, 2012



Fr. Gabriel Ramacciotti, O.S.M.
65 Years Solemn Profession
September 21, 2012



Fr. Declan Doherty, O.S.M.
55 Years Solemn Profession
September 29, 2012



Fr. Thomas Heskin, O.S.M.
60 Years Solemn Profession
October 19, 2012



Fr. Ignatius Kissel, O.S.M.
50 Years Solemn Profession
October 11, 2012

IN MEMORIAM



Fr. Thomas M. Crotty, O.S.M., a solemn professed friar and priest of the Order of Friar Servants of Mary (Servites)-United States of America Province, died Thursday, April 19, 2012 at Irvine Cottages Care Center, Mission Viejo, CA. He was seventy-eight years of age and a priest for fifty-one years. Fr. Crotty entered the Servite Order at Mater Dolorosa Seminary, Hillside, IL, on October 2, 1948, and the Servite Novitiate in Granville, WI, on August 16, 1953. He was ordained a priest on May 28, 1960. Fr. Crotty was an instructor at St. Philip High School, Chicago; was involved in the Province Retreat Ministry; served as associate pastor at Our Lady of Sorrows, Chicago; Seven Holy Founders, Affton, MO; and Our Lady of Grace, Palm Bay, FL. He retired in 2003 at Seven Holy Founders Priory, Anaheim, CA, and served as a chaplain to the students at Servite High School. Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.



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At the National Shrine of St Peregrine (Our Lady of Sorrows Basilica in Chicago), a healing Mass and blessing with relic of St. Peregrine is celebrated at 11:00am on the third Saturday of the month. There is a healing Mass and blessing in Spanish on the second Saturday of each month, also at 11:00am..

Notes

from the National Shrine of St. Peregrine

The Importance of St Peregrine Today

Saint Peregrine was healed of a cancerous ulcer on his leg which was considered beyond saving. The fame of this event in 1325 spread rapidly round the western Church. Christians, and especially the sick, began to invoke his name and seek his intercession for the relief of their suffering and even for a cure from sickness. The canonization of Saint Peregrine in 1726 increased people's devotion to him which spread to the universal Church.

Even with great developments in medicine, there are still many diseases which are incurable. Some of them are claiming more and more victims. Because of this, the prayers to this saint are becoming more intense and more frequent because this was a person who knew suffering and sickness in his life and also knew the power of divine grace helping him. The Servite family – with its friars, sisters, secular, and lay members – is committed across the world to offering a “ministry of compassion” in a spirit of service towards those who are sick and suffering.