



Society of the Divine Savior
SALVATORIANS

Apostles for our times.

IT WAS GOD'S GRACE

Brother Ervan Digman, SDS



On a small farm in Dickeyville, Wisconsin, the seeds of hard work, simplicity, and faith were well planned for Donald, now Bro. Ervan Digman SDS. As a young boy, Bro. Ervan assumed the chores and labors of a dairy farm, milking 30 cows before he left in the mornings to attend a nearby small Catholic school which Salvatorian Sisters ran. The Salvatorian Sisters in Dickeyville significantly influenced him as he began to entertain thoughts of religious life and ultimately pursue his vocation as a Salvatorian brother at the young age of 15.

Shortly after his profession of vows in 1950, he was assigned briefly to the Society's Jordan Seminary in Michigan until his transfer to the Society's Divine Savior Seminary in Lanham, Maryland, where he stayed for a decade. At the Lanham seminary, he picked up several trades. Even without the benefit of a classroom, he kept a huge boiler room running, did construction work on the property, and operated heavy machinery. Energized by hard work, Bro. Ervan also set up a chicken and turkey farm and processed the eggs for sale. To top that off, he added the role of bus driver to his duties until he was reassigned to St. Michael Parish in Grand Ronde, Oregon.

St. Michael Parish was one of the first Society-established Indian ministries in the USA back in 1892, and Brother is quick to enthusiastically point out that he was the last Salvatorian to serve in that original Society ministry. He served 26 years in this tiny parish, teaching

physical education, running the roller rink, and making sure maintenance was taken care of on the buildings and school bus, which he also drove. "One of my fondest memories throughout my ministries has always been driving that bus in Grand Ronde, Oregon, and working at the roller rink," he shared. "Any time I could help at the Indian Mission, I was happy."

He then moved to Mesa, Arizona, and served at Queen of Peace Parish until his



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retirement in 2000. His dedication to fixing and maintaining almost anything earned him a “jack of all trades” title from the parish. He did it all from painting and plastering to plumber, electrician, groundskeeper, and more, never losing his momentum.

“It was God’s grace that called me to my vocation, came to my assistance, and pulled me through some challenging circumstances in my life,” shared Bro. Ervan, who is celebrating 71 years of profession as a Salvatorian Brother this summer. Though Bro. Ervan’s activities have lessened, he continues to enjoy his golden years of retirement at Alexian Village in Milwaukee.