



Society of the Divine Savior  
**SALVATORIANS**

Apostles for our times.

**PABLO PAUL PORTLAND, SDS**

*Formation journey and ministry through the years*

“I was incredibly struck by the kindness of the Salvatorian community at the high school I attended. That is truly what initially attracted me to discerning life as a Salvatorian religious brother,” said Fr. Paul Portland, SDS. “I was called first to be a Salvatorian and later a priest.”

Before he had accepted his calling to the priesthood, Fr. Paul worked as a college English professor in the late 70s. While teaching a college writing course, Fr. Paul was helping a student who had written a very personal story. As he was assisting her, she commented, “I wish you were my parish priest. It is so easy to talk to you.” As simple as that sounds, it was the nudge he needed and a turning point that led him to discern priesthood as his vocation.

After theology and ordination, he began serving in campus ministry while teaching English, working with young people in Pittsburgh and Kentucky for the next four years. His role as a faculty member gave him additional credibility with faculty members and allowed him to encourage their participation in retreats and their understanding of the potential effect they could have on these students.

His ministry changed, taking him to Wisconsin to serve in various leadership capacities for 15 years, including as Provincial Director for six years.

During this time, one of his notable initiatives was to build up the Salvatorian Family of religious priests, brothers, sisters, and lay men and women, all working together.

He was off to Mexico next. He learned to speak Spanish fluently and immersed himself in Spanish ministry and culture for two years. “Maybe it was my Italian background,” he said, “but the community and how we lived together during that time was a potent and familiar feeling for me.”

Having learned Spanish, he returned to parish work in Arizona and Tennessee for eight years until he returned to Mexico, intending to establish a Salvatorian Community there. He also served as director of a retreat center receiving people from the USA. “We helped visitors understand how our lifestyle correlates with poverty for the people of Mexico,” he said. “I was elected to serve on the Generalate in Rome, Italy, before the Salvatorian community came to fruition in Mexico.”

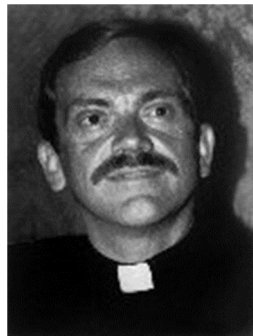
In Rome, he served as Secretary and was the primary contact for Englishspeaking Salvatorians around the world. “I visited these different areas of Asia, not as a tourist, but living in tandem

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with the people. It was a wonderful way to experience the culture from the inside,” he said. “What struck me was how ‘Salvatorian’ these places were, in the sense that they focused on the good of all people and on building community.”

After Rome, Fr. Paul was called back to the USA to serve in a formation role as director of candidates and as Pastor at St. Pius X parish in Wisconsin. Fr. Paul also serves on the provincial team.

Reminiscing, he said, “In my early days as a Salvatorian priest in Pittsburgh, I got lost one Sunday, going to say Mass at a parish for the first time. Since I was late, I didn’t introduce myself but simply started the Mass. While greeting parishioners in the vestibule after Mass, a visiting couple came up to say I reminded them of their priest back home in a Salvatorian-led parish in Arizona. Why? Because they felt they were part of what was going on, not observers. To me, that captures what Salvatorians are like around the world.



*Captions (l-r)*

- a. Fr. Paul at a youth Mass in 2005 in San Juan del Río, Querétaro, México*
- b. In 1994, at the conclusion of his term as Provincial.*
- c. During his days as a professor in Kentucky.*