

HOPE



Salvatorian Newsletter Summer 2023

STARTING POINT

One of the great gifts we enjoy as religious priests and brothers is true diversity in the kinds of ministries that we are a part of. Whether we are pastors, educators, spiritual directors, authors, advocates for the marginalized, arts and craftsmen, or one of a host of other possibilities, we all share a common commitment to sharing God's love with the world. For Salvatorians, our founder, Blessed Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan, is a unique point of reference as we live out our vocation to share the loving-kindness of the Divine Savior.

One of Blessed Francis Jordan's hopes for us Salvatorians was that we would also be available to serve where the needs were the greatest. However, our goal wasn't simply to be social workers or champions of

the poor—and those are important works! Instead, we were always to seek to form the whole person, helping each woman, man, and child we serve to live their faith in its fullness.



In this issue of HOPE, you will have an opportunity to learn more about how Salvatorians of today continue this ministry, grounded in timeless spiritual traditions but always looking toward the future. We remain grateful to all our friends and benefactors who make our work possible.

In the Divine Savior,

Bro. Silas, SDS

PROVINCIAL SYNOD

Moving forward in faith

Many religious communities in the United States are facing the realities of diminishing numbers, fewer vocations, and aging membership. While examining our own challenges with a sense of humility and honesty, the Salvatorian Province, however, is looking to the future and exploring ways forward that will ensure the vitality of our community and our various ministries.

This past June, a Provincial Synod culminated a year-long process of discernment, discussion, and input, reflecting not only on the needs of our province, but also celebrating the broader Salvatorian Family and



Bro. Silas Henderson, SDS, and Fr. Jeff Wocken, SDS, celebrate Mass at the conclusion of the Synod.

Synod continued...

TRADITION & VISION

Parish Work

Parish work has been a core value for the Salvatorians since the late 1800s when the first Salvatorians arrived on the east coast of the USA and made their way to the Pacific Northwest. They found work on Native American reservations and in parishes in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and eventually California. Parish ministry has remained a fundamental value for the Salvatorians across the country ever since.

Fr. Mark Sterbenz, SDS, ordained in May 1939, is an example of a Salvatorian with a significant history of parish ministry. He was one of the founding



*Fr. Mark Sterbenz,
SDS
(d. 1993)*

members of Mother Mary Mission in Phenix City, Alabama, which quickly grew thanks to his skills in fundraising. He went on to serve at parishes in Tennessee and Georgia, eventually returning to Alabama in 1961.

St. Joseph's Mission in Huntsville, Alabama, (now St. Joseph Church) was founded by Salvatorian priests in 1952 as part of an apostolate dedicated to bringing the Catholic faith to African Americans. The school opened in 1956 with Salvatorian sisters teaching 48 students; enrollment doubled within eight years. When Fr. Mark returned to Alabama to serve as Pastor at St. Joseph Church, he was instrumental in a very historic event. This September, the school will be celebrating



*Quiet
integration at
St. Joseph's
under the
leadership of
Fr. Mark.*

a 60th anniversary: On September 3, 1963, when desegregation was a tumultuous topic in the south, St. Joe's welcomed 12 white students to learn alongside the already established 106-person African American student body, becoming the first racially integrated school in the State of Alabama. According to St. Joe's historical account, during this history-making "reverse integration," one mother of a white student had described her child's reception as peaceful, warm, welcoming, and comfortable.

Fr. Mark had downplayed the significance at the time, stating, "All we're doing is teaching religion...to whites, to blacks, to anybody who comes. It's living the Gospel, plain and simple."

Today, Salvatorian-led parishes remain faithful to the call to live the Gospel and not to rest until every man, woman, and child knows the Savior through all ways and means possible. Salvatorian priests and brothers also continue to lead and to engage in help-out ministry at parishes nationwide. "Since our foundation, Salvatorians have helped at parishes and founded parishes when the need presented," said Fr. Reed Mungovan, SDS, pastor at



*Fr. Reed takes time to
connect during recess.*

Parish Work continued...

SALVATORIAN PRESENCE

The Society has a number of its members ministering in parish apostolates around the country. Below is what was shared when asked to reflect on “What makes a Salvatorian-led or influenced parish unique.”

Fr. Tom Tureman, SDS, pastor at Most Holy Trinity in Tucson, Arizona, said “The answer is simple – welcome and acceptance. The number one response from parishioners and visitors is a sense of welcome and acceptance.”

At Most Holy Trinity, one parishioner offered, “Social justice is prominent. We are encouraging everyone to participate and remind them they have a place at the table of service.”

Fr. Paul Portland, SDS, pastor at St. Pius X in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, shared, “My experience leads me to believe that Salvatorian parishes are inclusive and welcoming to diverse groups of people. We tend to focus on building community, the Body of Christ, and not just participate

in rituals. That community carries into decision-making; lay leadership takes center stage, not just ‘father’.”

Fr. Joe Lubrano, SDS, pastor at St. Joseph Church in Huntsville, Alabama, noted, “Since the Salvatorians have been in Huntsville, we have made a significant impact in the community regarding openness and acceptance of all people without exception. Holy Family School serves the under-served, especially the poor.”

A parishioner at St. Joseph’s said, “One of the things my husband and I found most attractive about St. Joseph’s church is the diversity of the population and the love that is apparent, binding these diverse populations together.”

Fr. Pat Nelson, SDS, pastor at St. Margaret Mary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, said, “As a Salvatorian parish, we encourage growth in desire for universal acceptance, charity to the underserved, and an unwavering commitment to fight human trafficking, and

Salvatorian Presence continued...



Fr. Virginius takes his social justice ministry to the street.

...Synod



The synod began with a prayer service.

international membership. This Provincial Synod is an important milestone in the ongoing process of planning, and our Salvatorian priests and brothers are hopeful. As we move forward in faith, we know we have a future.

“When faced with obstacles and setbacks, our founder, Bl. Francis Jordan, always demonstrated even greater trust in Divine Providence and hope for the future of the

community and its mission to make God’s goodness and kindness known to all people,” said Fr. Jeff Wocken, USA Province Provincial. “When we gathered in the Provincial Synod, we faced the uncertainties and challenges of the future with the same faith, hope and determination, and called upon the Holy Spirit for guidance.”

The work continues. Your prayers and support of our priests and brothers will help make these dreams possible for the Society.



Fr. Milton Zonta, SDS, General Superior, shared a video message from Rome.

JUBILARIANS



Our Salvatorian Family gathered to celebrate Jubilarians in June at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology in Hales Corners, Wisconsin. Thank

you to all for your dedication and service to the Salvatorian Family and to our Savior. We especially recognize these Salvatorian Priests and Brothers being honored for milestone Jubilees.

65 Years

Fr. Richard Driscoll, SDS
Bro. Peter Farnesi, SDS

60 Years

Fr. Richard Maloney, SDS
Bro. George Maufort, SDS

50 Years

Bro. John Hauenstein, SDS
Fr. Michael Hoffman, SDS
Fr. Dennis Thiessen, SDS
Fr. Alan Wagner, SDS

40 Years

Fr. Thomas Tureman, SDS

...Salvatorian Presence

class oppression.”

Fr. Virginius Osuagwu, SDS, who ministers at Church of the Resurrection Parish in Burtonsville, Maryland, commented, “The presence of a Salvatorian in a parish, whether he leads the parish, or assists at the parish like I do, brings a different dimension of core Salvatorian values. Ministry is rooted in the experience of the joy that comes from the simplicity of Jesus the Savior, who meets people where they are in their ‘daily-ness,’ offering forgiveness to the sinner, justice to the oppressed, hope to the hopeless, a voice to the voiceless and comfort to the hurting. It is simply bringing Jesus to the people.”

...Parish Work

Mother of Good Counsel Parish in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, since 2019. “Here at MGC, we have served since 1925 and will continue ministry to those in need now and in the future.”

Please remember the Society of the Divine Savior in your will

A bequest is a wonderful way to support the mission and ministry of our Salvatorian Priests and Brothers, and is a testimony of your care and concern for them. Our legal name is “Society of the Divine Savior, Inc.” and our taxpayer number (EIN) is 39-0806210.

OUR MISSION

In the spirit of our founder, Blessed Francis Jordan, the Society of the Divine Savior was founded more than 130 years ago and is a Catholic religious community working to share the love and mercy of our Savior, Jesus Christ, through all possible means.

SALVATORIANS

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SALVATORIANS
Apostles for our times.