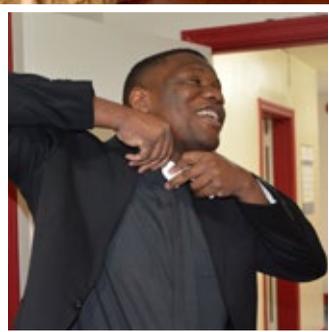


# The Josephite Harvest

www.Josephites.org

Volume 130 No. 1 | Winter 2017

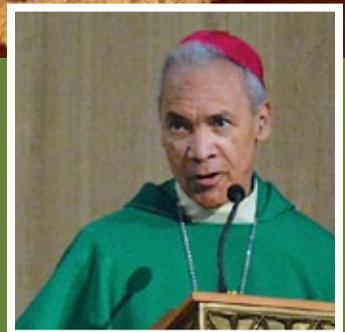
*Come, All Ye Faithful*



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During Advent, we are called to enlarge the horizons of our hearts, to be surprised by the life that is presented each day with its newness. In order to do this we need to learn not to depend on our own securities, our own established plans, because the Lord comes in the hour which we don't imagine.

Pope Francis

VOLUME 130 • NUMBER 1 • WINTER 2017 • PRINTED IN USA • JOSEPHITES.ORG

The Josephites are pro-life, standing for safeguarding the right to life of every human being; pro-family, promoting the dignity and sanctity of marriage; pro-chastity, upholding the virtue all are called to embody in their state of life.

*The mission of The Josephite Harvest is to assist and promote the evangelizing ministry of the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart. It is the voice of the Society to summon both men and means to our work and to establish enduring bonds with our benefactors. It shall encourage devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to our Patron St. Joseph, and to the Patron Saints of our Society. It shall foster racial and cultural understanding and reconciliation. It shall make known the achievements of African Americans that reflect the influence of the Catholic faith. It shall recognize the labors of clergy and lay persons who work for the evangelization of African Americans.*

The Josephite Harvest (ISSN 0021-7603, USPS 277-080) is the oldest Catholic mission magazine still publishing in the United States. Established in 1888, it is published quarterly by the Josephites (The Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart) to keep our readers abreast of the work in the Josephite apostolate. Periodicals postage paid at Baltimore, MD. Title and seal represent accepted trademark. Contents may be reprinted with permission of the St. Joseph's Society of the Sacred Heart, Inc.)



— FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL —



Very Rev. Michael Thompson, SSJ,  
Superior General

**Dear Friend of the Josephites:**

The sights and sounds of the season are in the air at the Josephite Generalate. Decorating is part of our Advent, as we prepare for the coming of the Christ child. Yes, we have some signing and talking characters mixed with more pious representations of the season. They all bring joy to visitors and that's an important part of season. I pray that you are having a joyful Advent, too.

In the Christmas story, Joseph plays a prominent part. But how old was Joseph when he and Mary took that journey to Bethlehem? The article by Josephite Father Joseph Doyle may surprise you.

This issue of The Harvest reports on many joyous occasions. I was very pleased to participate in the ordination of Deacon Kingsley. Please keep him in your prayers as he takes the final steps toward priesthood next spring.

I am happy to report that we have 27 men preparing for priestly ministry. You can read about four of them who were admitted to Catholic University of America this fall.

Our parishes celebrated anniversaries in Washington and New Orleans. Josephite Bishop John Ricard led a 20th anniversary celebration for the Our Mother of Africa chapel in the national shrine of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

Additional articles will inform and inspire you, including a day-by-day calendar for Black History month.

If you are like me, you are surprised how quickly 2017 has flown by. As we reflect on the blessings of this year, I want to thank you for supporting the Josephite ministry in the African-American community. Without your prayers and your financial support, it simply would not be possible to do what we do.

Please consider making an end of year contribution to the Josephites. In addition to the men we are preparing for priesthood, we have a number of retired and infirm Josephites who need care. Your donations make it possible for us to perform this ministry that was started back in 1871.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Very Rev. Michael Thompson, SSJ  
Superior General and Publisher



Josephite Bishop John H. Ricard ordained Ogbuji Kingsley Chukwudiebube to the diaconate on Oct. 28 at St. Luke Church in Washington, DC.

*Priestly ordination expected in May*

## *On the Way to Priesthood*

A jubilant congregation gathered in prayer and song to celebrate the ordination of Josephite Transitional Deacon Ogbuji Kingsley Chukwudiebube on Saturday, Oct. 28, at St. Luke Church in Washington, DC.

Knights of Peter Claver, Knights of Columbus and Knights of St. John in plumed hats led the procession into the church with about 250 people in the congregation.

Deacon Kingsley, a native of Nigeria, was introduced by

Father Roderick Coates who was responsible for certifying his qualifications and qualities.

Bishop John Ricard, rector of St. Joseph seminary, performed the ancient diaconate ordination ceremony by calling the new deacon to come forward from the congregation.

Deacon Kingsley stood before Bishop Ricard, and in strong voice said "I do" to each of the questions that are presented for diaconate ordination. Then, he lay face down before the altar

while the congregation prayed a litany.

"I do find him worthy of the diaconate," Bishop Ricard said to the applause of the congregation and a round of African music was accompanied by rhythmic clapping.

Bishop Ricard laid hands on the new deacon after the Litany. There was a round of supportive hugs from Josephite priests who were present.

The new deacon put on a dalmatic with a Josephite logo

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911 W. Lake Avenue, Suite B  
Baltimore, MD 21210  
(ISSN 0021-7603)



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and ascended the altar to assist with Mass.

In his homily, Bishop Ricard recalled a trip to Burundi where the needy lined the episcopal procession into an ornate cathedral. He said he felt the call to go outside the church and help the poor. "We are appointed by Christ to look after all of the church, including the church outside the walls. As Josephites we have a special responsibility to our mission in the African-American community, especially to those who are without proper housing, jobs, health care and those who are poor and hungry."

The bishop said, "The

diaconate is the last and most important step on the way to priesthood. We ask God to bless you today and always."

Bishop Roy Campbell, auxiliary bishop of Washington, also participated in the service.

At the end of Mass, the new deacon introduced his family including his sister and nieces and nephews, who came from Nigeria.

In closing remarks, Josephite Superior General Father Michael Thompson spoke to the family. "Thank you for the gift of your brother. He will be a great encourager to others to come and serve the Lord. We need families to get

back to encouraging priesthood."

Speaking to the new deacon, Father Thompson noted that he will now perform baptisms, anoint the sick and preach the Gospel. "Find joy in the Gospel and bring it to the people," Father Thompson said, "so when you come to priestly ordination, you will be filled with the spirit."

After the service, Bishop Ricard said he's known Deacon Kingsley for five years. "He has many leadership qualities and he is very responsible."

Deacon Kingsley said, "It's by God's grace that this happened. I am very grateful. This is an awesome day."

# Our Lady of Grace celebrates 80 years

## *Pride of parishioners stirs celebrations year-round*

BY DEVIN BROOKS

Travel about an hour up the road from New Orleans and you will find the spirit of celebration alive and well at Our Lady of Grace parish.

The historic church in Reserve, Louisiana, is proud of its heritage and it likes to celebrate, according to Josephite Father Christopher Amadi. In fact, they like to get together so much they planned an 80th anniversary celebration that went on throughout the year.

A special day, June 4, honored the African-American Catholic community and the deep pride its parishioners feel for Our Lady of Grace.

“The parishioners decided to have an 80th anniversary celebration to thank God for our past and present as we look forward to our future,” said Father Amadi, of the unusual selection of an anniversary celebration party after hosting a 75th only five years ago.

Our Lady of Grace has much to celebrate, including giving thanks to the Josephites, who began the parish 80 years ago when African-American Catholics could not worship in the same place as white Catholics at a nearby church. Father Amadi said African Americans were “treated like second-class citizens in the church,” which led to an invitation for the Josephites to minister to African Americans to give them “a sense of dignity and full attention.”

Because of the support of Mother Katharine Drexel, Our Lady of Grace celebrated its first Mass in 1937, under the leadership of the Josephites.

The 80th anniversary celebration also honored the Holy Family Sisters, who staffed the first school for children of color in the area from 1932 until 1996.

The parish also helped other parishes to open and flourish, the



Parishioners at Our Lady of Grace church in Reserve, Louisiana, gather to celebrate the 80th anniversary of their parish.

pastor said. “Our Lady of Grace serves as the foundation for other Catholic churches in the area.”

Father Amadi said the parishioners planned “every step of the anniversary, including forming a celebration committee. They picked the events that would mark their joy at being a part of Our Lady of Grace, including hosting banquets and creating fun activities for the families of the Church such as an Amazing Race. It was so lovely to see the parishioners take charge.”

The festivities started in January, with an opening ceremony and banquet. June 4th marked another day of celebration that included Archbishop Gregory Aymond, the archbishop of New Orleans.

Father Amadi said that even

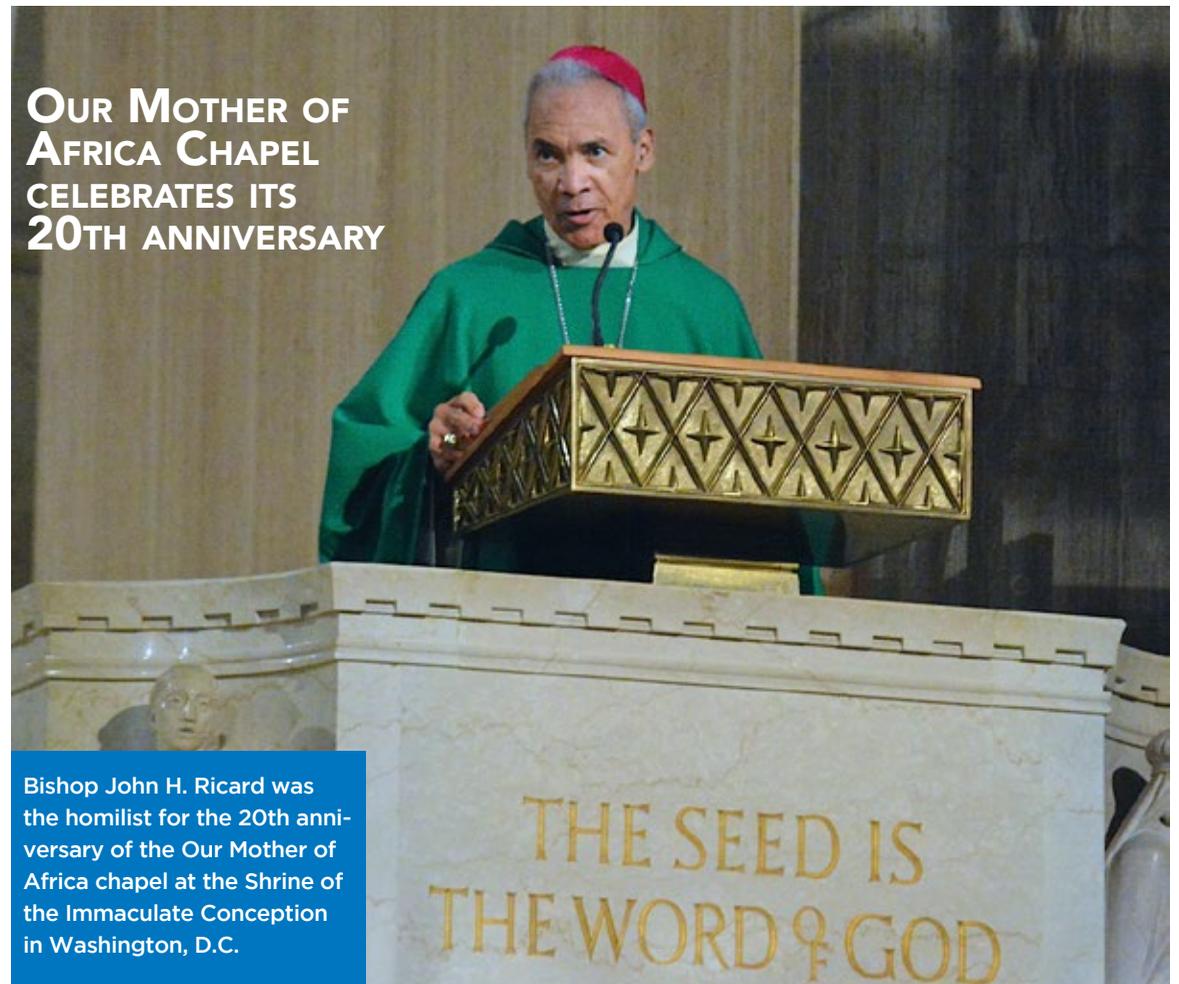
hurricane season couldn’t derail the parish’s plans: despite bad weather causing a few reschedules.

Another 80th anniversary festivity included a Family Day that welcomed members of other faith communities. Father Amadi noted that some parishioner have spouses who practice different faiths and “Our Lady of Grace welcomes them with open arms, both at celebrations and during prayer and worship at the church.”

He said weekly Sunday Masses are “expressive and full of lively Gospel singing.”

Father Amadi said, “The anniversary celebrations are a thanksgiving to all who have contributed to the church. Our Lady of Grace looks forward to continued strength and growth in the years to come.”

## OUR MOTHER OF AFRICA CHAPEL CELEBRATES ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY



# A SACRED CONVERSATION

BY DEVIN BROOKS

Inside the cavernous Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington is the chapel of Our Mother of Africa.

The chapel narrates the story of African-American Catholics through its artwork and mosaics. It is a chapel of prayer, respite and reflection.

Josephite marked its 20th anniversary with Bishop John H. Ricard, serving as homilist.

The bishop, who also serves as rector of St. Joseph seminary in Washington, spoke of the injustices African Americans suffered during the era of bondage and slavery which are reflected in the chapel. However, he said that the chapel is a testament that there is a “full and complete inclusion of African Americans at all levels of Church and society.”

In his homily, Bishop Ricard described the imagery within the Chapel that includes a replica of a slave ship and the arc of wooden

planks resembling the hull of a ship. The bishop said that slavery has been called “America’s original sin.”

The four Evangelists are also present inviting visitors to connect the presence of Mary and Jesus throughout the struggle of African-Americans from slavery to freedom.

The bishop said that St. Mark welcomes visitors to Our Mother of Africa, encouraging them to experience the story the Chapel tells. Then, St. Luke invites visitors to gaze upon the statue of Mary holding Jesus, reminding you that, “He is the One whom your heart seeks, and whom the victims on this voyage, your ancestors, looked to for deliverance and freedom.”

Further on, St. Matthew looks at a scene of African Americans journeying from slavery to freedom. Finally, St. John looks upon Jesus on the Cross, reminding all who visit that Jesus suffered the injustices of evil men as well. “He

was raised to new life by the Spirit. So, too, shall you, as you follow Jesus,” Bishop Ricard told the congregation.

Bishop Ricard described the Chapel as a place of sacred conversation: “You will soon come to the realization that you have been engaging in something very special as you never have before, what the saints and the artists would call ‘a sacred conversation’ in this holy place, this chapel, dedicated to Mary, our Mother of Africa and all people.”

The Chapel portrays Mary and Jesus in the likeness of African Americans, honing in on the inclusion of them within all levels of the Church.

Bishop Ricard reminded the congregation “that today’s Gospel encourages us to practice love and forgiveness and to stand against intolerance and respect each other’s differences. Jesus showed the way, we are to follow him all the way.”

## BISHOP PROFILE: BISHOP DOUGLAS DESHOTEL

# 'The Josephites are an integral part of the mission'

BY DEVIN BROOKS

In each issue, *The Harvest* interviews a bishop in a diocese where the Josephites serve. Following is an interview with Bishop John Douglas Deshotel, bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

The Diocese of Lafayette is home to five Josephite parishes, Saint Theresa in Crowley, Our Mother of Mercy in Church Point, Shrine of Our Mother of Mercy in Rayne, St. Francis of Assisi Church in Breaux Bridge and Immaculate Conception in Lebeau. How would you describe the value of the Josephites' service to the work of your diocese?

The Josephites have been an integral part of the Diocese of Lafayette for decades. They provide an invaluable service to the people they serve in the parishes they staff. The understanding, compassion and dedication they have, especially to African-American Catholics, has helped the church to grow and prosper in the Diocese of Lafayette.

Please describe the relationship, or how the parishes fit in, with the Diocese of Lafayette.

The parishes staffed by the Josephites are part of the mosaic of many peoples and cultures that make up the Diocese of Lafayette. They truly contribute to what we understand as the Universal Catholic Church.

In what ways does the Diocese of Lafayette include religious communities into its mission?

Religious communities, like the Josephites, are an integral part of the mission of the Diocese of Lafayette. They build up communities of faith to make Jesus Christ and his mission of salvation part of every life they serve. They are included in all activities of the diocesan presbyterate. Father Joseph Campion is a member of the Presbyteral Council.

What new developments are ahead for the Diocese of Lafayette?

In 2018, the Diocese of Lafayette will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The Josephites have been a part of that history. The theme for the 100th is, "A Century of Love." The mission of the Josephites has been a



Bishop John Douglas Deshotel, bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana, makes a presentation at Our Mother of Mercy church in Church Point, Louisiana.

part of that Century of Love.

Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience with the Josephites?

I have been influenced by Josephites since I was 20-years old. My Moral Theology professor was a Josephite, Father Joseph Leonard. One of the best professors I ever had and he was entertaining too.

## Pastor Profile: FATHER ANTHONY BOZEMAN

# 'Everyday is a wonderful challenge'

Father Bozeman reflects on his service at St. Raymond and St. Leo the Great

BY DEVIN BROOKS

For Josephite Father Anthony Bozeman, pastor of St. Raymond and St. Leo the Great parish in New Orleans, an encounter with a Josephite pastor in his youth set him on his path to the priesthood.

Each summer his family would visit St. Joseph's Church in Tuskegee, Alabama. There he formed a lifelong fellowship with a Josephite priest who significantly impacted his religious life.

As a boy, Father Bozeman hadn't realized that the priest was a Josephite, he told *The Harvest*. It wasn't until years later when, "I realized all these interconnections with the Josephites and I decided...to work in the black Catholic community." Father Bozeman then spoke about being inspired by the Josephites work: "That's the kind of impact that I think is necessary. I wanted to be part of a group that did good work like that."

His experience at St. Joseph's church made him feel the Josephite community was the place where he "felt the call from God."

Father Bozeman cherishes the fellowship of the Josephites, who are the first and only religious community serving African-American Catholics in the United States. When he took final promises as a Josephite, it was a "culmination of a life's journey," where the community gathered to celebrate "the gift of priesthood."

As he serves his parishioners and other commitments to the church, Father Bozeman goes day to day nonstop.

There is no such thing as a typical day for Father. Everyday is a "wonderful challenge." He said he starts the day with 8 a.m. Mass that is often followed by duties as



Father Anthony Bozeman, SSJ, meets with parishioners at his parish St. Raymond and St. Leo the Great parish in New Orleans



chaplain at St. Katharine Drexel Preparatory School. Then, he drives to the hospital to visit the sick. Finally, it's back to the parish for meetings, planning, worship and prayer.

He recalled that he was astonished and humbled when he was asked to give the homily at the annual Josephite Jubilee three years ago, which marks the Feast of St. Joseph. "Normally you would get someone who's been around a lot longer than me," Father Bozeman said of

what he described as one of his most memorable. "It was such a surprise because at that point I was professed for only a couple of years and to be asked to be the homilist for the Jubilee was a great honor."

To those who may consider joining the Josephites, Father Bozeman said there's no time to waste. "Run to us as quickly as possible," he said. "You'll never be as fulfilled doing anything else than serving God and God's people."

# ‘Our purpose is to build up the church’

*Josephites send four seminarians to Catholic University of America*

BY ERIK ZYGMONT

Four young men who have transitioned directly from Josephite formation in their native Nigeria to The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., will enrich the church in the United States, said Bishop John H. Ricard, SSJ.

That’s the experience all over the U.S., and that’s the providence of God,” said Bishop Ricard, himself a Josephite and rector of St. Joseph’s Seminary in Washington, D.C., the men’s residence while they study at Catholic University. “If you look at the men who will be ordained in this country, many are African. Many are from former mission lands – that’s the reality.”

Attending Catholic University are Ugochukwu Henry Ihuoma, 25; Ifiok Ini-Obong Umanah, 25; Dominic Tochi Njoku, 28; and George Agwu Liwhuliwhe, 32. All four are in the pre-novitiate phase of study. Having completed philosophy studies in Nigeria, they were ready to enter formation at Catholic University immediately, without preparatory studies at other seminaries in the Washington area.

They join Fred O. Kaddu, 30, a native of Uganda who is continuing his formation for the Josephites at Catholic University.

“The purpose of (Catholic University) is to provide a rich theological, ecclesiastical and spiritual center for future priests throughout the U.S.,” Bishop Ricard said. “We’re really thanking God for that and are taking advantage of that. There are certain canonical requirements



Four Josephite seminarians were recently admitted to studies at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. (from left) Dominic Tochi Njoku, Ifiok Ini-Obong Umanah, George Agwu Liwhuliwhe, and Ugochukwu Henry Ihuoma. All four are in the pre-novitiate phase of study.

for any student to enter the priesthood. Catholic University has those. Its education is superior.”

The Josephite motherhouse in Baltimore funds the seminarians’ formation; a semester of classes at Catholic University’s School of Theology and Religious studies costs in the \$22,000 range.

Bishop Ricard said the newly arrived seminarians are on track to finish their studies and be ordained in four years.

He added that the four men, with whom he interacts on a daily basis, are adjusting well to American life. “They show great promise,” he added. “They’re enthusiastic about their studies and about every aspect of their ministry.”

Bishop Ricard noted that with language and cultural differences addressed in formation, the future priests’ major adjustments to stateside ministry will likely be “the overall approach of Americans to most things.

Understanding the role of the laity (will be an adjustment),” he added, “because they come from a more traditional society.”

Nevertheless, he said, “Most of the guys – the ones who are ordained now – are adjusting quite well.”

With regard to the missionary role-reversal, Bishop Ricard is both realistic and optimistic. “It’s no big secret – things have changed,” he said. “We don’t have the vocations in the U.S. we once had. ... The church needs priests. Every diocese needs priests. These guys are filling in, and they’re bringing a new perspective. The Irish, German, French and English missionaries went to Africa; now, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, Africa is feeding the church in the West, not only in the U.S. but in Europe as well.”

The dynamic dovetails flawlessly with the Josephite mission, the bishop added. “Our purpose is to build up the church,”

## REQUIESCAT IN PACE

# FATHER JOSEPH NICHOLAS BEGAY,

## SSJ

Josephite Father Joseph Nicholas Begay, 90, passed to a new life suddenly on Oct. 30. Because of failing health, he retired three years ago at the age of 87. had seen his retirement three years ago.

Father Begay was born in Scranton, PA, on Jan. 31, 1927, the fourth of five children of Anna and Nicholas Begay. He was baptized in St. Vladimir Church in Scranton and attended local public schools. In 1945 and 1946, he served in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps. He then attended the University of Scranton before entering the Josephite minor seminary in Newburgh, N.Y. in 1949.

He made his first year of profession as a Josephite at the end of the novitiate year and continued at St. Joseph Seminary in Washington until his ordination at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in 1959.

His first assignment was to St. Richard’s Josephite parish in Boston and after two years, he transferred to St. Pater Claver parish in Baltimore for two more years. Then, he moved to Washington serving at St. Cyprian parish until 1967 and then he was sent to Our Mother of Mercy parish in Houston, Texas.

For the next six years, Father Begay was pastor of St. Joseph’s church in Tuskegee, Alabama and also served as Newman



chaplain at Tuskegee Institute in 1976. He then served as pastor of St. Joseph’s church in Welsh, LA, serving for eight years. Then he served as pastor for three years each at St. Peter Claver, Baltimore and Our Lady of Grace, Reserve. LA. Then, came a six-year term as pastor of Holy Redeemer church in Washington. His final period of 19 years of ministry was at St. Luke’s parish in Washington.

While in Washington, Father Begay delighted in serving as chaplain to the police department of several cities of his ministry and attending anniversaries of retirees and assisting at their funerals.

Father Begay’s Funeral Mass was held at St. Luke’s Church, Washington, D.C., on Nov. 6. Burial was in Mt. Olivet Cemetery also in Washington, D.C.

May his soul rest in peace.

## JOSEPHITE CORNERSTONE AND TURNING A CORNER

Resting in the back yard of the former Josephite Headquarters in Baltimore for 87 years was the cornerstone of the former St. Joseph Seminary in the same city.

Now removed to St. Joseph’s Manor, it awaits a new resting place in the courtyard of the St. Joseph Seminary in Washington.

The date on the stone also represents the turning of a corner of the Society itself.

In 1893, the Mill Hill Josephites were building a new seminary in Baltimore to replace the temporary setting in a small converted hotel.

They were also discussing the possibility of a separate American community, allowing the 16 priests assigned to the African-American ministry to choose to return to England, join an American diocese or remain as an independent community.

Five chose to stay with the responsibility of serving eight parishes in four cities, two seminaries and an orphanage. A tremendous challenge which continues from 1893 to 2018, the upcoming 125th anniversary of the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart.



# Knights' junior leaders bring faith, vision to U.S. and beyond

BY ERIK ZYGMONT

Severe poverty in Haiti and the scourge of diabetes are two problems that will be attacked with renewed vigor, thanks to Carrington Guillory and Kennedy Wiltz, who were elected leaders of the Junior Knights and Junior Daughters, the respective junior divisions of the Knights of Peter Claver and Ladies Auxiliary.

Mr. Guillory, 16, was elected to his second two-year term as Junior Supreme Knight at the biannual Junior National Convention, July 9-12 in Kansas City, Mo.

"It's been a family thing coming down the generations," Mr. Guillory said, noting that his great-grandfather, grandfather and father have all been active in the Knights, whose founders

Mr. Guillory's entire family, in fact, including his mother and siblings, participate enthusiastically in the Knights and Ladies Auxiliary.

His older brother, Creighton, serves the organization's Louisiana State District as an Emerging Leader, facilitating the transition from the junior division (ages 7-18) to the senior division. His sister, JonMarie, serves as liaison for the Emerging Leader in the Central States District.

Carrington Guillory and his parents are parishioners at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Lake Charles, La., where he has been an altar server and recently became a lector.

"It means a lot," Mr. Guillory said of his faith life. "Since I've been young, my mom and family



Junior Grand Knight Carrington Guillory shares a smile with Bishop Glen Provost of the Diocese of Lake Charles, La.



Junior Supreme Lady Kennedy Wiltz (left) pauses with Junior Texas State Treasurer Jayla Jackson at a recent community project.

have taught me it's the most important thing in our lives."

He is putting his faith into action with plans to raise funds to build six homes in Kobonal, Haiti, for families living in extreme poverty, by the end of his second term in 2019.

"In my first term, we raised enough to build the first house," he said, explaining that the project is in partnership with Cross Catholic Outreach, a ministry that targets the poorest of the poor around the world. "The goal is to build a small village of homes."

Ms. Wiltz, 14, has been involved with the Junior Daughters since she was 9, and said she was "very honored and humbled" to be elected to her first term as Junior Supreme Lady.

She said the organization has helped her "become a better leader," particularly during her recent campaign.

"I had to speak at a lot of events," said Ms. Wiltz, a parishioner of Our Lady Star of the Sea Church in Houston, a Josephite parish. "I have a sweet, little voice, but I learned to overcome that and project my voice strongly."

Furthermore, the campaign helped her develop spiritually as well, she added. "I had to pray a lot about the things I did and the people I talked to," she said. "I had to know God was with me in every decision I made."

Like Mr. Guillory, Ms. Wiltz's family includes a long list of Knights and Ladies, including both her parents and members of their extended families.

"She's a legacy Claver, and that's something that's really strong in our organization," explained Katie Guidry-Johnson, National Counselor of Junior Daughters. "We're able to pass this on to our kids."

Ms. Wiltz plans to tackle diabetes, a disease which has affected many friends and families, but also hunger and bullying.

She hopes to launch a junior division food bank day, possibly in June, and start an anti-bullying blog.

"I was bullied in elementary school," Ms. Wiltz said. "I feel like even though it was a hardship for me, I can change other's lives by giving good advice."

Supreme Knight James Ellis, who also serves as CEO of the Knights of Peter Claver, said the juniors, who number approximately 2,500 across the U.S., are well equipped to pursue their goals. "They'll often come in being just kids, but we teach them leadership skills, including how to use parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order," he said. "They know how to run meetings and set goals."

That's not all they learn. "From a young age, we teach our juniors the power of our faith – the power of the Catholic Christian faith," Supreme Knight Ellis added.



## Cardinal urges fight against racism

By Mark Zimmermann

The sin of racism must be recognized, confronted and overcome, Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl said in a new pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Racism Today."

"Intolerance and racism will not go away without a concerted awareness and effort on everyone's part. Regularly we must renew the commitment to drive it out of our hearts, our lives and our community," the cardinal wrote.

"The mission of reconciliation takes on fresh emphasis today as racism continues to manifest itself in our country, requiring us to strengthen our efforts. We are all aware of incidents both national and closer to home that call attention to the continuing racial tensions in our society," Cardinal Wuerl said.

He noted that the nation's Catholic bishops have established an Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism made up of clergy, laywomen and laymen "to speak out against this divisive evil that leave great harm in its wake."

The cardinal added that, "It is our faith that calls us to see each other as members of God's family. It is our faith that calls us to confront and overcome racism."

He cited the story of creation from the Book of Genesis and Catholic teaching in the Catechism of the Catholic Church on the equality and human dignity of all people.

"What makes us equal before God and what should make us equal in dignity before each other," Cardinal Wuerl noted, "is that we are all sisters and brothers of one another, because we are all children of the same loving God who brought us into being."

Racism, he said, is a "sin against our neighbor" that offends God and goes against the unity of the body of Christ, a unity that all Christians share by means of their baptism.

The letter's release coincides with the Catholic Church's celebration of November as Black Catholic History Month. The cardinal noted how the "stain of racism" has affected people in every continent throughout history, often manifesting itself in marginalization, discrimination and oppression to indigenous people or newcomers.

Eliminating racism might seem "too great a task for any one of us or even for the whole church," Cardinal Wuerl said. "Yet we place our confidence in the Lord. In Christ, we are brothers and sisters to one another."

# Who is on your gift list for Christmas?

## Will you give a gift this year to the Josephites?

Have you been invited to the Christmas novena for the Josephites? It should be in your mail box soon, if you haven't received it already.

For Father Nelson Moreira, the treasurer of the Josephites, the Christmas novena brings special gifts.

"We are always thankful for the financial support and many prayers that we receive at Christmas time," Father Moreira told *The Harvest*. "The generosity of so many is what keeps this ministry afloat."

He added that all the outpouring of generosity at the end of the year shows the loyalty and dedication of donors and benefactors, who also generously support the Josephites throughout the whole year.

"The end of year donations are always very good. I think that these donations show support for our men who are serving in the African American community throughout the year," he said.

"The end of year donations also reflect that people are beginning to think about tax season. Many of them would like to make a donation to the Josephites rather than to the government," he said with a laugh.

The Josephite treasurer knows first hand the daily, weekly and monthly expenses of running an international religious community. "We need donors to help us with the 25 men that we have in retirement. Some of them need special care," he said of the aging Josephites.

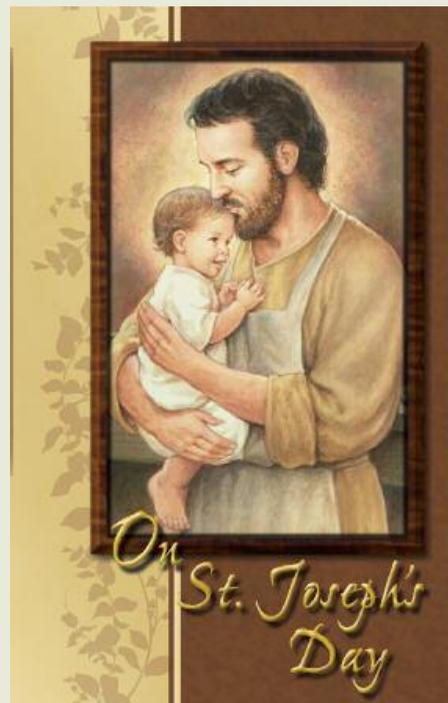
He also noted that the Josephites are also preparing 29 men for service as priests, 22 of whom are studying in Nigeria and seven who are enrolled in the seminary here in the United States.

Father Moreira said that many donors are now using online capabilities to contribute annually and even regularly as members of the Sustaining Partners program.

"At Christmas and at the end of the year, people are in the giving spirit. We Josephites have been blessed by their generosity," he said.



Father Nelson Moreira, SSJ



## In this holy season of giving, let us celebrate Jesus Christ who makes all gifts possible.

Advent season is a season of anticipation. We see this anticipation everywhere, in malls, in offices, in schools and in our churches. Well, what are you anticipating this year?

The Nativity story, beginning with the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem and the birth of our Savior, Jesus, is a familiar story of anticipation. The Josephites identify closely with St. Joseph. St. Joseph led the journey that brought us the greatest gift of all – the baby Jesus in Bethlehem.

Today, we all have a role to play in the unfolding journey of God's plan.

Since 1871, we Josephites have responded to the evangelization needs of the African-American community, especially through our parishes, schools and other ministries. The rewards of this ministry are great. Like St. Joseph, we know that saying "yes" to Jesus

is the way to true happiness and peace.

If you are reading *The Josephite Harvest*, you likely have financially supported our mission. Would you consider a special end of year Christmas gift? An end of year gift is a commitment to support ministry in the African American community. For some, the end of year donation reduces their tax responsibilities. For others, it continues a legacy started years ago by grandparents and parents. In this year of financial change and challenge, your gift is more valuable than ever.

Why is your gift important? Josephites minister to black youth, families and the elderly in our parishes and schools in Maryland, Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, California and Washington, D.C. They need our presence, care and service.

Each child who is served in our pre-school programs is blessed by your generosity. Every inner city parish – often a beacon of hope in an urban neighborhood – benefits from your goodness. Every school we oversee, every group and organization that we nurture is possible because of your commitment to join with the Josephites to share the gift of faith.

The Josephites are helping to prepare 29 young men for priesthood – 22 of them are studying at houses of formation in Nigeria and another seven are studying here in the United States.

We also are supporting 25 Josephites – some of whom need special care at the St. Joseph Manor – who are retired.

All those who make a Christmas offering are remembered in the Christmas Novena of Masses.

During the Christmas season, we Josephites are especially mindful of all of the gifts that our benefactors have given to us. Your support – in prayers and donations – makes it possible for us to minister in the United States.

The Josephites give thanks for all who provide the financial resources needed for Josephites to serve the African American community. With your help, and God's grace, we will continue the journey.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with many blessings.

## CHARITABLE GIVING TRENDS

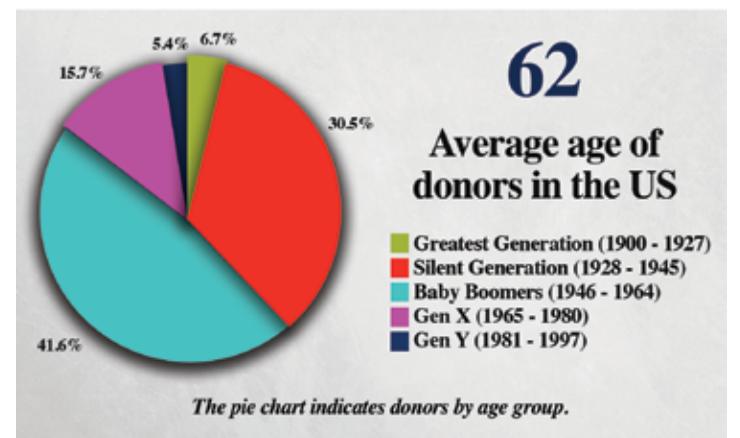
Americans continued to be generous in giving to charities, especially faith-based groups, according to the Blackbaud Institute for Philanthropic Impact and the website Charity Navigator.



## RELIGIOUS GROUPS RECEIVED THE LARGEST SHARE OF DONATIONS IN 2016

### DECEMBER

Largest giving month of the year  
**RELIGIOUS GROUPS RECEIVED:**  
**18%** of their annual contribution  
**24%** gifts donated online





Gonzaga College High School students look through the archives in late June at Georgetown University in Washington. Gonzaga history teacher Ed Donnellan and six students searched through the archives to unearth any ties to slavery at the Jesuit-run high school.

## High school students unearth past ties to slavery at Jesuit school

BY MARK ZIMMERMAN

After Georgetown University last year publicly acknowledged it had benefited from the sale of 272 enslaved women, men and children in the 1800s, a high school teacher at a Jesuit school in Washington invited the historian from the institution who had researched the sale to speak to students in his history classes.

Some students asked Adam Rothman, the historian and Georgetown professor, whether their school, Gonzaga College High School, also may have benefited from slavery. For a time, the Jesuits from Georgetown back then operated Washington Seminary, which later became Gonzaga.

The professor said he didn't know but challenged students to find out, said Gonzaga history teacher Ed Donnellan, who invited Rothman to speak to his classes.

Six students, along with Donnellan, took up the challenge and presented their findings to an audience Nov. 5 at the Ignatian Family Teach-in for Justice. The annual event, attended by approximately 2,000 students

from Jesuit-run high schools and universities in the U.S., focuses on social justice issues.

The students were given access to a variety of records at Georgetown University's archives, which had accounting books, written histories, enrollment records and other documents. In the documents, they found references for what may have been two transactions, and perhaps others, related to slaves. One may have been for payment for transport of an enslaved person to a Jesuit-run plantation in Southern Maryland and the other documented a payment for "weeding in the garden" at the seminary to a person named Gabriel, listing no last name, possibly the slave of a seminary student.

There also are other transactions, clues that the students will further research to understand as much as they can about the school's ties to slavery.

"We're at the beginning of this," said Donnellan, who also is looking at the possibility of taking students to visit the remnants of the Jesuit slave plantations

in Maryland. Donnellan said the information, much like at Georgetown University, "sat there for years and no one talked about this."

"I don't think we as a country have faced this," he said.

The students spent two weeks at Georgetown during their summer break looking at records for about five hours each day, and they think there's more waiting to be found.

The students said their findings were met with a variety of reactions from other students. Some said, "we need to do something about it," said Joe Boland, who participated in the research with his brother Jack, as well students Jack Brown and Matthew Johnson.

Some students were grateful for the work they had done while others said: "What does this have to do with me?"

In light of the students' findings, Jesuit Father Stephen Planning, president of the school, issued a statement saying that "while more needs to be done to flesh out the details of Gonzaga's past, it is clear that the Washington Seminary had connections to slavery in the earliest years of its existence. This is a fact about our past that we cannot deny, and it is one that we need to face with sincere humility."

The priest commended the students and their teacher for the work, for which they received no school credit.

"Why does it matter that the Washington Seminary had connections to slavery nearly 190 years ago?" Father Planning asked. "Because in order to be true to who we are as a Gonzaga community, we need to stand before God not just celebrating our laurels and accomplishments, but acknowledging our sins and failings."

"Our past sinfulness matters, both as individuals and institutions," he continued. "As much as we hate to admit it, our past sinfulness has an impact on who we are today. It is only when we accept our entire history, the good and the bad, that God's mercy can move our hearts to greater humility, compassion and understanding."

FACES & PLACES

60 Years

## St. Luke church in Washington celebrates 60 years

St. Luke church in southeast Washington celebrated its 60th anniversary on Oct. 29.

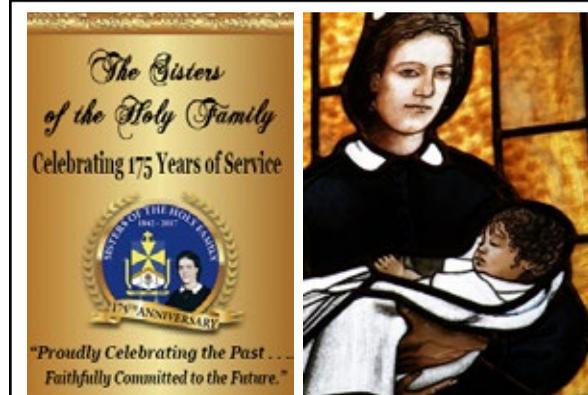
The celebration, with fitting vibrancy under the direction of its pastor, Josephite Father Cornelius Ejiogu, culminated a year of festivities.

St. Luke's comes from a longer legacy of African-American parishes in the nation's capital.

The Church of the Incarnation in the Deanwood section of Washington, D.C. dates to 1924 in a tiny former out mission of Mount Pleasant, Md. It grew in numbers and up to the 1950's, plans for a larger church were on-going

Additional missions were set up at Our Mother of Mercy and at St. Luke's, each now with their own pastor.

When construction began in 1956, the name was given to St. Luke's and the dedication took place on Sept. 22, 1957. The church had a capacity of 650 and boasted a 70-foot tower and a new rectory.



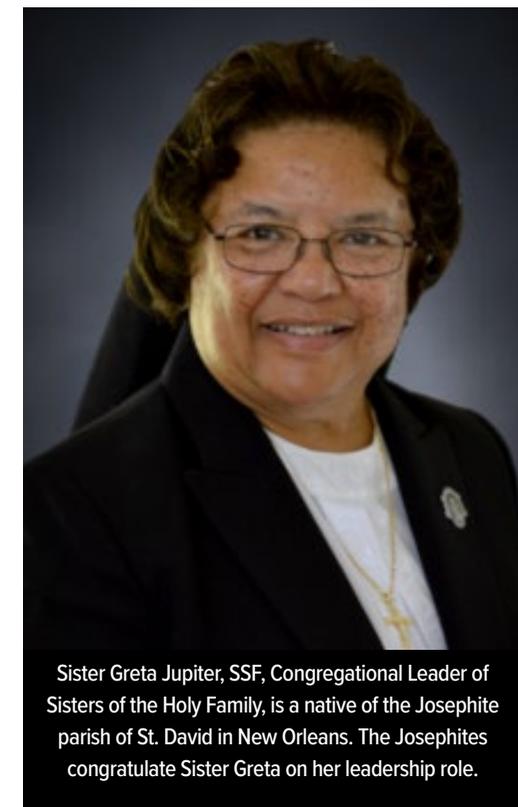
## Josephites congratulate Sisters of the Holy Family

Henriette Delille (1812-1862), a free woman of color, along with Juliette Gauden and Josephine Charles, co-founded the Sisters of the Holy Family in 1842 in New Orleans and was approved by Bishop Bland for caring for old people and teaching catechism to slaves.

In 1852, the three pronounced their vows in St. Augustine Church in New Orleans and opened a school for free girls of color.

Since 1905, the Holy Family Sisters have shared 21 missions with the Josephites by staffing their parish schools from Houston to Washington, DC.

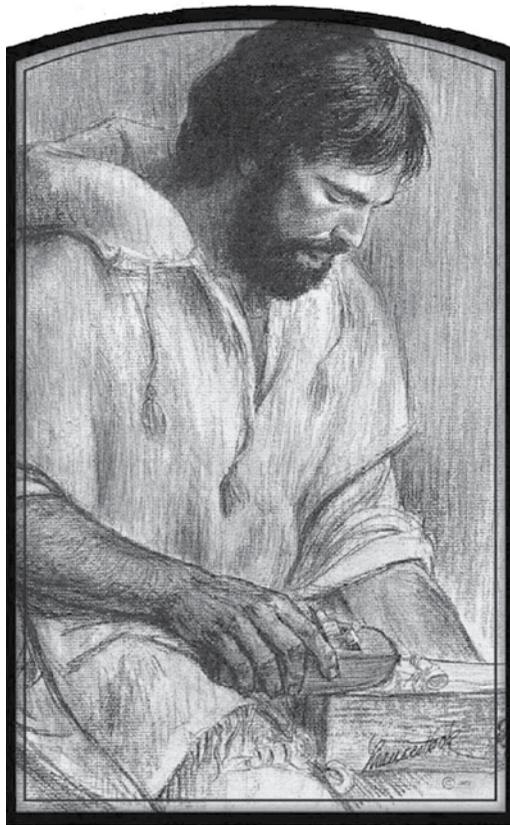
The Josephites are grateful for their sharing of ministry and ask God's blessing on their community in the years to come.



Sister Greta Jupiter, SSF, Congregational Leader of Sisters of the Holy Family, is a native of the Josephite parish of St. David in New Orleans. The Josephites congratulate Sister Greta on her leadership role.

# Join us in The Prayer to Saint

*February 18 to March 19*



When we need help we know we can go to Saint Joseph. And, for good reason. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, was chosen by God to be the protector of the Holy Family.

The stories are familiar. We can imagine his sacrifice in heeding the advice of the Angel telling him of the Virgin birth. During the journey to Bethlehem and those first days in the stable, we see Joseph watching over Jesus and Mary night and day. We can only wonder at his courage as he faced Herod's wrath which resulted in the treacherous flight into Egypt.

For centuries, Christians have known that they can confide in Joseph, like a father, and call on him for support in times of trouble.

We Josephites have a special devotion to St. Joseph. He is our patron. Saint Joseph has been our beacon for more than 125 years of ministry in the African American community here in the United States.

As we prepare to celebrate the feast of Saint Joseph on March 19, it has been our sacred custom to prepare for his feast by invoking him for thirty-days (30) for our special intentions and those of our

friends and benefactors. Why 30 days? These 30 days of prayer honor the 30 years that Joseph spent with Jesus and Mary on earth. It is in the 30-day prayer that we petition St. Joseph by his sufferings, sorrows and joys to hear our requests and carry them to God's throne on high.

You are invited to join your petitions and your prayers with the prayers of all Josephites as we prepare for his feast day.

As part of Saint Joseph's family here on earth, Josephites ask him every day to "obtain for all those who have asked our prayers everything that is useful to them in the plan of God." We look forward to having you join us in these 30-days of prayer.

Whatever sacrifice you wish to make to support the ministries of the Josephite Priests and Brothers will be used to support our 27 young men in formation, our retired, sick and infirm Josephites and those of us who serve in places which cannot afford to pay the salary and expenses of a priest or brother.

# Thirty Day Joseph

## Prayers answered by St. Joseph

*Recently I found your prayer leaflet "Thirty Days' Prayer to St. Joseph among my deceased wife's things. I started reading it every day. Years ago when I was in 8th grade I said a novena to St. Joseph and asked for a wonderful family. He really answered my prayers, I am 83 years old and I have a wonderful family.*

**St. Louis, Mo**

*I am a new convert to the "Thirty Days' prayer to St. Joseph. Wow! Amazing stuff. I am telling everyone who will listen about this prayer.*

**Smyrna, GA**

*After months of searching, I was panicked about finding a house near a particular school before the fall. I began praying the St. Joseph 30-day prayer. One month later I found the perfect house. Thirty days later we signed our contract. I didn't know it but at the same time my mom began praying the prayer for my brother who was unemployed for months. He found recently found a great job. I think St. Joseph can do anything.*

**Roswell, GA**

*I have made several 30 days novenas to our wonderful St. Joseph. I have had cataract surgery and fighting glaucoma and other eye problems. I recently had laser surgery and it was completely successful. Thank you St. Joseph!*

**Mount Desert, ME**

*I want to thank God for an answered prayer for my aunt's health that was obtained by St. Joseph. She had been in rehab for about three weeks after surgery. When she finally got home she could only walk minimally and received daily nursing care. I began to say the Thirty Days' prayer to St. Joseph and within three weeks her condition has improved significantly. She is able to walk much better, is cooking again and feels a renewed hope. Both she and her husband are grateful for the answered prayers from St. Joseph. Thank you for distributing this prayer. It has helped me in my faith in God and St. Joseph's role in our lives when we seek his friendship and intercession.*

**Atlantic City, NJ**

*My mother always believed in and prayed to St. Joseph. When my mother died, I found myself overwhelmed with grief. I was overcome with the pain of losing her on the heels of the deaths of my father and brother. I was scared and deeply sad and I didn't know where to turn for solace and help. I found an old article and prayer card to St. Joseph in my mother's belongings. I felt that it was a sign of her guiding me to pray to St. Joseph for help.*

**Brooklyn, NY**

*Beset with several concerns of late I turned to "The Thirty Days' Prayer to St. Joseph". It is with great prayerful thanks that I write today. I am so indebted to, grateful for and blessed by the answers received from St. Joseph in this lovely and thoughtful devotion. It is now a forever part of my prayer life. I am so grateful for the introduction to so beautiful a prayer.*

**Joliet, IL**

## ST. JOSEPH DAY PRAYER

May good Saint Joseph, protector of Jesus and Mary, watch over and protect you and all those you love.

As a special remembrance, I have enrolled you and your intentions in the Thirty Days Prayer to Saint Joseph

offered by the Josephite Priests and Brothers

Saint Joseph, our protector, pray for us.

Feast Day, March 19

The Josephites, an American order of priests and brothers, have served the African American community faithfully since 1871.

You are invited us to join us in the 30-days Prayer between February 18 and March 19 or any consecutive 30 days of the year.

Write or call for your 30-Days Prayer folder or if you need more copies of this card.

The Josephite Mission Office  
911 W. Lake Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21210  
Phone us toll free  
- 866-346-6727  
Visit us at [www.josephite.com](http://www.josephite.com)

# TWO TEENS IN BETHLEHEM

## *How old was St. Joseph when Jesus was born?*

BY FATHER JOSEPH DOYLE, SSJ

It is fairly certain that the Blessed Virgin Mary was in her early teens when she was espoused to Joseph the carpenter and a year or so later when she gave birth to Jesus in Bethlehem.

But what about St. Joseph? How old was he? Was he as old as most artists have portrayed him for the past 1600 years? Certainly not!

With the exception of some Eastern Rite Catholics and Orthodox Churches, most Christian denominations now believe that Joseph was a young man. Jewish historians would agree with them because in the days of Jesus, it was the custom for girls to marry around the age of 13 and young men around the age of 18 or 19.

While the Quran devotes a whole chapter to the birth of Jesus and exalts Mary's privileged status, there is no mention of St. Joseph. Indeed, according to Islamic tradition, Mary was alone when she gave birth to her son, Jesus.

One reason why artists from the fifth century to the twentieth century portrayed Joseph as an old man was because of various apocryphal writings prevalent in the early centuries of Christianity. Two examples would be the "Protoevangelium of James" and "The Story of Joseph the Carpenter," both written in the middle to late second century A.D. These "gospels" were not

divinely inspired, but many people, including some saints, treated them as such.

St. Epiphanius, for example, wrote that St. Joseph was over 80 when he was espoused to Our Lady. St. Jerome, along with a number of the early Fathers of the Church disagreed with him and those who held this false opinion.

Why did the authors of the apocryphal gospels write such things? Some simply wanted to "fill in the blanks" about the hidden life of Jesus, or possibly they wanted to protect the virginity of Mary. In our own lifetime, however, some holy people have seen things differently. St. Jose Maria Escriva said, "I see him (St. Joseph) as a strong young man, perhaps a few years older than Our Lady, but in the prime of his life and work". And Ven. Fulton J. Sheen in his book, "The World's First Love," writes that Joseph was probably a young man, strong, virile, athletic, handsome, chaste and disciplined.

It is interesting to note that artists from the first centuries of Christianity did not always agree with the apocryphal writings. Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi (1742-1831), a Dominican theologian and historian with a special interest in Jewish language and customs, stated that in the most ancient marbles and ivories, St. Joseph is portrayed

as very young and almost always beardless. Similar images can be seen in the third century catacombs of St. Hippolytus in Rome and on the sarcophagus of St. Celsus in Milan, which is from the fourth century.

It doesn't take a scripture scholar to come to the logical conclusion that the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary had to be a young man.

First of all, it was in the plan of God that Jesus, Mary and Joseph appear as a "normal" family in the eyes of their family, friends and neighbors so as not to draw any undue attention to their hidden mystery. The identity of Jesus was to be a secret, even from the devil, until the Savior had arrived at his "hour."

Second, Mary needed a young husband, not an octogenarian, to accompany and protect her and her child on their many long, dangerous journeys. This was especially true of the "flight into Egypt," but there were many other trips to Jerusalem which Joseph had to make every year, always accompanied by Jesus after he reached his 13th year.

Third, Jesus needed a young, intelligent and skilled father to pass on to him the heritage of the Jewish people, as well as to teach him a trade as all the other fathers did with their sons. Craftsmen, such as Joseph, had to be especially strong because they did construction work with

heavy stones, large pieces of lumber and even iron.

What are the implications for teenagers as they consider the fact that two teens were the instruments of the Heavenly Father's plan to send his beloved Son into the world for our salvation? What an awesome privilege that was! Mary, of course, was a necessary instrument, in that the Incarnation, the Word become Flesh, could not have taken place without her "Fiat," Joseph, on the other hand, was not necessary, but he was a most fitting instrument for the reasons mentioned above.

Although teens in the first century A.D. were much more mature than they are today, there are many lessons to be learned from the two teens of Bethlehem.

To begin with, their initial relationship was arranged by God, although their parents were certainly involved, as was the custom at the time. How many teens consider serious relationships with friends to be arranged by God? And do they hold on to this idea through courtship, engagement, and finally marriage?

Once God arranged the espousal of Joseph and Mary, he did not abandon them, especially in their test of faith. Mary passed the test immediately, but Joseph had to struggle until the Angel of the Lord explained to him in a dream the facts about Mary's pregnancy. One author calls this, "Joseph's Gethsemane."

Today, many teens struggle with faith issues – beliefs about religion which they can't explain to themselves or others. But Joseph was a just, righteous teen who observed the Law, much to the admiration of his contemporaries. Living a good moral life goes hand in hand with living a good faith life. So whether we are teenagers or octogenarians, we have a lot to learn from the two teens in Bethlehem.

*Father Joseph Doyle, SSJ, is novice director of the Josephites and resides in Washington, D.C.*





# What can be done about the sin of racism?

*Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from information provided to clergy after events in Charlottesville, Virginia and to address the sin of racism. The universal message of Christ's call for us to be one.*

## The Problem

Recent events in Charlottesville earlier this year – a vile replay of history at its worst – caused many to realize the extent to which the sin of racism inflicts our nation. White Supremacism, Anti-Semitism, Neo-Nazism, Fascism, and Racism are evil and have no place in our nation, neighborhood or heart.

Racism persists in many hidden ways. However, the events in Charlottesville earlier this year

exposed how crude and blatant racism is. We must call out the sin of racism.

Racism is real. Its effects are in each of us, in our Church, and in our nation. Racism and its most extreme expression in White Supremacism are toxic diseases that underlie countless forms of division, violence and hatred.

Almost 40 years ago, the bishops of the United States wrote a Pastoral Letter on Racism. Among the many things they discussed was the fact

that “Racism is a sin: a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family, and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father.”

The fundamental problem is this: too often we are apt to group people as either “us” or “them.” And when we see another as “one of them,” we tend to act out of fear – a fear of the unfamiliar and a fear that they will somehow harm us. This is the root from which racism too easily springs.

## The Answer

The answer is Christ, who proclaimed the oneness of the human family.

The answer is Christ, whose Church is a “house of prayer for all peoples” (Is. 56:7).

The answer is Christ, who came to heal the divisions of sin and death.

The answer is Christ, who commands us to do what is right and just (Is. 56:1).

The answer is Christ, who prayed to his heavenly Father, “so that all may be one...” (John 17:21).

2

The answer is Christ’s Kingdom where there are no divisions; where there is no separating us from them, and where there is no fear of harm from “them.”

## What are we called to do?

The answer is Christ, and Christ calls for our conversion. His first words in the Gospel are, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt 4:17).

The recent events, and indeed the events unfolding over the last few years, days and hours

all point to the need that we, as a nation, as a people, have for conversion.

Conversion requires prayerful self-reflection. As a nation, we need to self-reflect on what aspects of our communal and civil structures actually divide and separate us. How are they covertly racist?

As a Church, we need to self-reflect on how we have been unwelcoming to the stranger, the person of a different race, or the immigrant. We need to self-reflect on how we have not challenged the sin of racism enough.

More so, we must listen to persons of a different race and listen to the immigrant. And, when we think we have listened, we must listen again. We must hear the story and begin to share the journey more deeply. Let us come together in the love of Christ to better know one another as sisters and brothers.

And in order for our nation and our church to be healed of the sin of racism, each one of us needs to reflect and be healed. We may not think of ourselves as racist, or being prejudiced, or intolerant but is that entirely the case? Intolerance and bias can

hide in our attitudes and arrogances. Where are the places in our own heart that might harbor hostility, concealed discrimination and prejudice?

Conversion requires courageous and ongoing self-reflection, it requires each of us to examine our conscience humbly before Christ.

We must be contemplative enough to allow the Lord to work in the depth of our heart on these issues.

So each of us needs to ask questions such as:

How have I been silent on the events of the past weeks? How have I been silent on racism? How have I participated in words or actions that denigrate others? What am I not seeing in myself, ignoring about myself that is contrary to love of neighbor, even those I do not know?

What fears do I knowingly or unknowingly hold about people that are different from me? How do I consciously or unconsciously act on those fears? In my choices, my beliefs, my actions, my attitudes? How have I failed to do what is right and just? Have I failed to ask Christ to heal me of all prejudice?



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH CALENDAR

## February 2018

Explore the history of African-Americans in the United States with our Black History Month Calendar.



**1**  
 On this day in 1978, the first stamp in the U.S. Black Heritage Series, featuring Harriet Tubman, was released.



**2**  
 On June 15, 1968, the Josephite Pastoral Center was founded in Washington, DC.

**3**  
 The First National Conference of Colored Women Convention took place.



**4**  
 On December 4 in 1833, the American Anti-Slavery Society was founded.

**5**  
 Originally established to educate freed slaves to read and write, the first of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities was Cheyney University in Pennsylvania, founded in 1837.

**6**  
 African Americans were responsible for the invention of 3D graphics, blood banks, gas masks, potato chips and Super Soaker water guns, according to the Atlanta Black Star.

**7**  
 Did you know? Black History Month started in 1926. The observance was proposed by Carter Godwin Woodson, an author and historian. It expanded in the 1970s.

**8**  
 In 1940, Hattie McDaniel was the first African American performer to win an Academy Award (the film industry's highest honor) for her portrayal of a loyal governess in "Gone With the Wind."

**9**  
 Martin de Porres became the first black American saint, canonized by Pope John XXIII on May 16, 1962. St. Martin de Porres exemplified God's love for all people, regardless of their level in society.

**10**  
 After 10 days of debate and voting on 125 amendments, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by a vote of 290 to 130.

**11**  
 Today is pop singer Mary J. Blige's birthday, born in 1971, as well as jazz pianist Dolly Adams, born in 1904.

**12**  
 On this day in 1909, the NAACP was founded.



**13**  
 St. Joseph's Seminary (Josephites) was founded in Baltimore, MD on September 9, 1888.

**14**  
 On St. Valentine's Day in 1867, Morehouse College, a historically Black institution of higher learning, was formed.

**15**  
 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday is on January 15th. He was born in 1929 in Atlanta, GA.

**16**  
 In 1967, chemist and scholar Robert H. Lawrence Jr. became the first black man to be trained as an astronaut.

**17**  
 Professional boxer Muhammad Ali was born on January 17th, 1942. He passed away on June 3rd of 2016.

**18**  
 On August 17, 1968 the Black Sisters Conference was founded.



**19**  
 Before Wally Amos became famous for his "Famous Amos" chocolate chip cookies, he was a talent agent at the William Morris Agency, where he worked with the Supremes and Simon & Garfunkel.

**20**  
 Jackie Robinson, baseball legend, was named Rookie of the Year on September 19, 1947.



**21**  
 John Baxter Taylor, the first African American to win an Olympic gold medal, also held a degree in veterinary medicine from The University of Pennsylvania.

**22**  
 Thurgood Marshall was the first African American appointed to the United States Supreme Court. He was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson, and served on the Supreme Court from 1967 to 1991.

**23**  
 The first Black U.S. Newspaper "Freedom's Journal" was published in New York on March 16, 1827.

**24**  
 The Black Catholic Clergy Caucus was founded on April 16, 1968. Abraham Lincoln also freed slaves on the same date in 1862.

**25**  
 St. Peter Claver was ordained a priest in 1604. He dedicated his life to the spiritual welfare of slaves. He is known for healing illnesses such as leprosy. Pope Leo XIII canonized him in 1888.

**26**  
 The Knights of Peter Claver were founded in Mobile, AL on November 7, 1909.



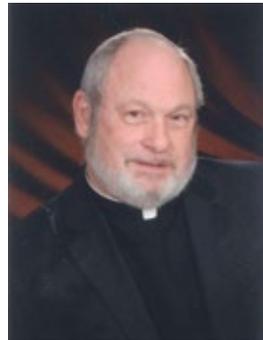
**27**  
 On February 27, 1872: Charlotte Ray became the first Black woman lawyer to graduate from Howard University Law School.

**28**  
 The first renewed Black Catholic Congress, Congress VI (the first five took place in the 1800s), took place in May of 1987 in Washington, D.C.

- 5 BLACK HISTORY MONTH ACTIVITIES FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!**
- ✓ Read "The History of Black Catholics in the United States" by Benedictine Father Cyprian Davis, who was known as the top chronicler of black Catholic history.
  - ✓ Talk about "What We Have Seen and Heard: A Reflection and Dialogue on Peace," a pastoral letter written by Bishop Edward K. Braxton of Belleville, Illinois.
  - ✓ Involve youth in discussion using the new African American Catholic Bible.
  - ✓ Show the movie "Bakhita: From Slave to Saint," about St. Josephine Bakhita, who was canonized in 2000.
  - ✓ Give copies of "My Little Black Catholic History Book" to children.

# CONTINUING THE MISSION

**BLESSED ARE THE  
MEEK FOR THEY SHALL  
INHERIT THE EARTH**



FATHER DONALD M. FEST

We remember the saints for two reasons. One is because of their great example of how to serve Jesus, to live the Christian life, and quietly contribute to the good of all. The other reason is we want their help, their prayers, to help us along our own earthly journey.

Below, I present two humble saints who had simple holy lives; both were religious brothers whose superiors, thinking they had no special skills, gave them the humble job of doormen.

First is Saint Alphonsus Rodriquez. Bert Ghezzi wrote, "Some saints attack the world head-on, like St. Peter Claver, a friend and disciple of St. Alphonsus Rodriguez. Others, like Alphonsus himself, fight personal battles against failure, loss, temptation and disease. We tend to admire the more activist champions but why should we think any the less of saints such as Alphonsus, who was more like us in his ordinary life and suffering?"

Born 1532 in Segovia, Spain, Alphonsus had to leave his Jesuit studies when his father died and he took over the family business, was married, and had a son. That son died, as did two other children and then his wife. Alphonsus sold his business and re-applied to the Jesuits. His lack of education and poor health, made him less than desirable for religious life, but he was accepted as a lay brother.

He was sent to Montesion College on the island of Majorca where he labored as the student hall doorman for 24 years. In that humble job, Alphonsus exerted a great influence on many people of that place. One such person was Peter Claver, now saint, who was his roommate. He had suggested to Claver to go to the new world and help the slaves. Alphonsus, the patron of Majorca, was canonized in 1888 along with his friend, St. Peter Claver.

The other humble man, now saint, is Andre Bessette. He joined the Holy Cross Brothers in 1870, but, because of poor health, he was difficult to place in a ministry. The Brothers were teachers and, even at 25, he still did not know how to read and write. The

Brothers asked him to leave the order, but Andre, out of desperation, made an appeal. He was sent to Notre Dame College in Montreal as the doorman and stayed for 40 years.

Andre was deeply devoted to Saint Joseph. In 1904, he asked the Archbishop of Montreal if he could build a chapel to Saint Joseph on the mountain near the college. He built a small wood shelter only 15-by-18 feet but Andre kept collecting money. The archbishop granted him permission to keep building as long as he didn't go into debt. Then soon came the walls, a paved road, even a pilgrim house! Through kindness, caring, and devotion, humble Andre helped many souls experience healing and renewal on the mountaintop, even cases of physical healing.

Despite financial troubles, Brother Andre wanted to build a shrine on the mountain and he would. At 90 years old, he was so ill that he had to be carried up the mountain to see the St. Joseph statue that was placed in the basilica. Andre died soon after on Jan. 6, which is now his feast day, and did not live to see the magnificent basilica completed. The sickly doorman, who had trouble becoming a brother, would never stop working on his job for God. On Oct. 17, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI canonized this disciple of St. Joseph, Andre, who did not let anything stop him.

Think of some service you have longed to perform for God and His people, but you thought was too overwhelming for you. What small bit can you do in His service? If you can't afford to give a lot of money to a cause, give just a little. If you can't afford volunteering hours a week, try an hour a month on a small task. It is amazing how those small, humble steps can lead you to great things as they did for Alphonsus and Andre.

The greatest among you is the one who serves the needs of all. Amen!

*Father Donald Fest, SSJ, is pastor of St. Joseph Church in Alexandria, VA.*

# JOSEPHITE PERPETUAL ENROLLMENTS

**FOR THE LIVING AND THE DECEASED  
JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2017**

Many thanks to all of our Sustaining Partners, who together with loved ones, have been enrolled as Perpetual Members of the Josephites, benefiting them with prayerful daily remembrances by all Josephites.

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Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title: **THE JOSEPHITE HARVEST**

2. Publication Number: **0121176013**

3. Filing Date: **9/15/17**

4. Issue Frequency: **QUARTERLY**

5. Number of Issues Published Annually: **4**

6. Annual Subscription Price: **\$5.00**

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®): **911 W LAKE AVENUE - SUITE B BALTIMORE, MD 21202**

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer): **911 W LAKE AVENUE - SUITE B BALTIMORE, MD 21202**

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank):  
 Publisher (Name and complete mailing address): **FATHER MICHAEL THOMPSON, SSJ 911 W LAKE AVE. SUITES B BALTIMORE, MD 21202**  
 Editor (Name and complete mailing address): **FATHER MICHAEL THOMPSON, SSJ 911 W LAKE AVE. SUITES B BALTIMORE, MD 21202**  
 Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address): **DANIEL MEDINGER 5947 TWIN KNOLLS RD - SUITE 17 COLUMBIA, MD 21045**

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.):  
 Full Name: **SOCIETY OF ST JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART**  
 Complete Mailing Address: **911 W LAKE AVE SUITE B BALTIMORE, MD 21202**

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box  None

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates). (Check one)  
 This publication, including all supplemental issues, is published for the nonprofit status of the organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes.  
 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months  
 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 1 of 4) (See instructions page 4) PSN 7530-01-000-9001 PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com

13. Publication Title: **THE JOSEPHITE HARVEST**

14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: **FALL 2017**

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)			
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		476	256
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)			
		55,104	56,865
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 page #3)			
		575	407
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)			
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i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15h times 100)			
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