

# Harvest

*The Josephite*

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## JOSEPHITE JUBILEE



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makes impact  
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CNS/Paul Haring

**“In the Child of Bethlehem, God comes to meet us and make us active sharers in the life around us. He offers himself to us, so that we can take him into our arms, lift him and embrace him.”**

– Pope Francis

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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.*

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## FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL



Father Michael Thompson, SSJ,  
Superior General

### Dear Friends of the Josephites,

During the last year, *The Josephite Harvest* has celebrated the 125 years of the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart. We are proud to share the stories of our rich history. From our beginnings in the Archdiocese of Baltimore in Maryland, the men and the means have been found to fulfill our mission to the African-American community.

In this issue, we take a moment to report the 125th anniversary celebrations. Filled with great joy and honor, I give thanks to God for the grace to celebrate this historic occasion. Through the intercession of our patron St. Joseph, I offer prayers and affection.

Thank you to the many parishes, individuals and corporate sponsors who collectively supported and congratulated the Josephites on this amazing milestone.

As we Josephites celebrate 125 years, we reflect on how we have served the African-American community in this exclusive mission to evangelize and spread the Gospel message. Through obstacles of hardship, racism and Church difficulties, we have much to be thankful for. With the help of our generous donors, we have built churches and schools, provided formation for priests and brothers and collaborated with other religious communities and lay leaders to share the Good News.

We remember gratefully the many Josephite priests and brothers, religious sisters, and dedicated men and women who served and continue to serve in this important ministry. We thank them for educating and instructing the sacramental faith of countless individuals who were, and otherwise would have been, neglected of a welcoming Church to call home and sustain a dignity of presence as Black Catholics.

Since Cardinal Herbert Vaughan responded in 1871 to the U.S. bishops, to the inception in 1893 of an American Pontifical Missionary Society, the Josephites have been steadfast in carrying the saving message of Jesus Christ to a people too often marginalized by society. With the support and generosity of our benefactors, the resilience of our priests and brothers, and prayers of faithful men and women, we celebrate this milestone.

Thank you for sharing this journey with us. I wish you a blessed Advent season and a happy and holy Christmas.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Very Rev. Michael Thompson, SSJ". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the last name "Thompson" being the most prominent part.

**Very Rev. Michael Thompson, SSJ**  
**Superior General and Publisher**

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# Faithfully serving the people of God

*Josephites celebrate 125 years with Mass at Baltimore Basilica*



Josephites process into the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore for the Nov. 17 Mass celebrating the 125th anniversary of their Society. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)

BY KAREN OSBORNE

Jubilation permeated the packed Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore Nov. 17 as hundreds of Josephite priests, brothers and parishioners gathered to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

The crowd arrived an hour early, singing Gospel music led by a choir made up of parishioners from multiple congregations. Josephite priests and brothers processed down the aisle to clouds of rising incense, greeted by proud, applauding parishioners wielding cameras and wide smiles. Many came from as far away as Los Angeles, Houston and New Orleans.

“Tonight, I claim the honor of being an honorary Josephite,” said Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori, who served as main celebrant for the Mass, noting that his diaconate assignment while preparing for the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Washington had been at a Josephite parish and that Josephites had a hand in shaping his ministry.

Archbishop Lori highlighted the historical and symbolic significance of holding the jubilee Mass at the Baltimore Basilica where Father Charles Uncles, SSJ, the first African American ordained in the United States, took his priestly vows in 1891.

“This beautiful building is part of your history, and it is ever so beautiful when you come home,”



Father Michael Thompson, SSJ, superior general of the Josephites, delivers the Nov. 17 homily during the Josephites' 125th anniversary Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)

the archbishop said. “Please know that your enthusiastic presence brings great joy.”

In his homily, Father Michael L. Thompson, SSJ, Josephite superior general, praised the resilience and commitment of the





Members of the congregation listen to the homily during a Nov. 17 Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore honoring the 125th anniversary of the Josephites. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)

Society, beginning with its origins as a missionary outreach of the Mill Hill Fathers in England that focused on the spiritual welfare of emancipated slaves.

Father Thompson also highlighted how the modern-day Josephites became independent of the Mill Hill Fathers 125 years ago to form the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart, which remains a multifaceted society with priests and brothers from around the United States, Africa and elsewhere all serving African-American communities across the

United States.

“I am inspired to walk down these halls where Father Uncles walked,” he said.

Father Thompson chronicled the many challenges faced by the Society through its 125 years – racism, prejudice and fear, sometimes from the Catholic Church itself, when some dioceses refused to recognize Josephite priests of any race, or when Josephites were forced to use white go-betweens such as St. Katharine Drexel to purchase land for parishes and schools. Josephites faced down



Women sing during the Nov. 17 125th anniversary Mass for the Josephites, held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)

Jim Crow laws, retaliation during the civil rights struggle, prejudice and ignorance, all the while faithfully serving the people of God, he said.

It is God that “keeps us going, changes our attitudes, destroys our racism,” Father Thompson said. “It has not been easy. But (Josephites) continued to move forward, to fight for the rights and the dignity of the people we serve, to build communities of faith.”

Today, Josephite parishes face similar challenges, and Father Thompson believes the “resilient



Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori celebrates a Nov. 17 Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore honoring the 125th anniversary of the Josephites. From left are Washington Auxiliary Bishop Roy Campbell Jr.; Baltimore Bishop Denis J. Madden, urban vicar; Bishop John Ricard, SSJ, rector of St. Joseph Seminary in Washington, DC, and Father Michael Thompson, superior general of the Josephites. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)



Knights of Peter Claver stand guard at the conclusion of a Nov. 17 Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Josephites. (Karen Osborne/Special to *The Josephite Harvest*)

faith” of the Josephites will be necessary for meeting the challenges of the future, such as the systemic racism.

“What is it that continues to make us endure obstacles in our faith and endure in our ministry? I realized that it was you, the faithful men and women of God,” he said, inspiring applause.

Bishop John Ricard, SSJ, rector of St. Joseph Seminary in Washington, DC; Bishop Denis J. Madden, urban vicar of the Archdiocese of Baltimore; and Washington Auxiliary Bishop Roy E. Campbell Jr. were present for the anniversary Mass, along with numerous Josephite priests, brothers and seminarians. Assisting deacons were Deacon Robert Shepard of the Baltimore Basilica and Deacon Willard Witherspoon of St. Peter Claver/St. Pius V Church in Baltimore.

Sister Annette Beecham, OSP, grew up in a Josephite parish, and her Baltimore-based Oblate Sisters of Providence have long been connected with the Josephites. She called the Mass “uplifting, touching, bringing forward the Spirit of God. This is a gift with a capital G. You want to embrace it, inhale it, if you will, take it in.”

Also in attendance at the anniversary Mass were

more than 200 Knights and Ladies of Peter Claver, many in full regalia. Josephites helped found the Knights more than 100 years ago in Alabama to allow Black Catholic laymen a fraternal organization of their own at time when they were barred from joining others. They haven’t forgotten the strong support the Josephites gave them, said Supreme Knight James Ellis, of Houston, Texas.

“We are here to celebrate and show our support,” he said. “Josephite priests were instrumental in founding our order. We owe our history to that organization.”

Patrick Barnes, a Knight of Peter Claver from Alexandria, Va., welcomed the chance to celebrate the Josephites who “walked me through the ups and downs

of life,” while Father Rodney Armstrong, SSJ, pastor of Mother of Mercy Parish in Houston called it “very uplifting to have an opportunity to recall the history of the Josephites, the strengths and the accomplishments despite the struggles.”

To his fellow priests, Father Thompson gave one clear message: remain faithful and resilient in the days to come, whatever happens.

“It was not easy, it is not easy, and it will not be easy, but we must continue to be resilient, to continue to be the people of God,” he said.

**“IT HAS NOT BEEN EASY. BUT  
(JOSEPHITES) CONTINUED TO  
MOVE FORWARD, TO FIGHT FOR  
THE RIGHTS AND THE DIGNITY OF  
THE PEOPLE WE SERVE, TO BUILD  
COMMUNITIES OF FAITH.”**

**FATHER MICHAEL THOMPSON, SSJ**



# BALTIMORE BASILICA HAS STRONG TIES TO JOSEPHITES



BY GEORGE P. MATYSEK JR.

The priestly ordination of Father Charles Uncles, SSJ, was both exhilarating and shocking to Americans of the late 19th century.

Kneeling in the sanctuary of what is now the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore in December 1891, Father Uncles was the lone Black man among 26 candidates who received the sacrament of holy orders from Baltimore Cardinal James Gibbons, the nation's preeminent Catholic leader.

"He was the first African American who was educated and ordained in the United States," said Father Michael Thompson, SSJ, superior general of the Josephites. Father Thompson noted that five years before Father Uncles' ordination, Father Augustus Tolton, an African American born in Missouri, had been ordained to the priesthood in Rome after completing studies there.

The New York Times reported on the historic Father Uncles ordination, writing that the congregation witnessing the liturgy was "unusually large and included many of the best colored people of the city."

Left unsaid was that the ordination took place inside a basilica that included a rear balcony where freed Blacks were separated from whites prior to the Civil War.

Writing in "Desegregating the Altar: The Josephites and the Struggle for Black Priests 1871-1960," Stephen Oaks pointed out that Father John Slattery, SSJ, the first superior general of the Josephites, later claimed the ordination marked the first time Blacks had been allowed to come into the Baltimore church in any



The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known as "America's first cathedral," was the nation's first Catholic cathedral established after the adoption of the U.S. Constitution. (George P. Matysek Jr./*The Josephite Harvest*)

good numbers or have good seats inside America's first cathedral.

Father Slattery wrote that the ordination was a "surprising innovation" to whites and, "to the colored, an evidence of the universality of the church."

The ordination of Father Uncles, who would become one of the founders of the Josephites and a seminary professor for future Josephites, was just one of many significant moments linking the Baltimore Basilica to the Josephites and their ministry to African Americans.



Josephite Father Charles Uncles was the first African American ordained in the United States.



## Site of major decisions

The Baltimore Basilica was the location of major meetings of U.S. bishops in the 19th century. Many Provincial Councils and three Plenary Councils were held at the neoclassical church, helping chart the future of the American Church.

During the Second Plenary Council in 1866, attended by President Andrew Johnson, bishops grappled with ways of ministering to freed slaves in the wake of the Civil War, ultimately failing to come to a consensus. Pope Pius IX later sent the Mill Hill Fathers to Baltimore from England to serve African Americans. It was from that religious community that the American Josephites were established 125 years ago.

The Third Plenary Council, held in 1884, resulted in the establishment of a special annual collection to be taken up in parishes across the nation in support of mission work among Native Americans and African Americans. The first-of-its kind initiative in the country continues to provide financial support for Native American and Black ministries throughout the country even today.

The Third Plenary Council was the largest meeting of Catholic bishops held outside Rome since the Council of Trent. In addition to increasing outreach to African Americans, it resulted in the commissioning of the Baltimore Catholicism, a question-and-answer book that was used for decades in educating Catholics in their faith.

In more recent times, the basilica has been home to important prayer gatherings connected to the African-American community. In the Great Jubilee Year 2000, Baltimore Cardinal William H. Keeler held a prayer service at the basilica, asking for forgiveness for sins of racism committed by the Church. Several interfaith gatherings have also been held at the basilica, focused on bringing an end to violence in Baltimore City.

## Josephite presence continues today

Father James Boric, current rector of the basilica, considers it a special privilege to serve at a cathedral with such a rich legacy.

"This place cannot be just a place of history," Father Boric said, calling it "awesome" and "inspiring" to know that Father Uncles and numerous other Josephites were ordained at the basilica.

"The faith must propel many more men to follow in Father Uncles' footsteps," Father Boric said. "Our faith is living, not dead."

Father Boric led a recent initiative to extend weekday hours at the basilica into the evening, offering a place of prayer in an urban environment for anyone looking for a deeper connection with Christ. The "Source of All Hope" effort includes providing more daily opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation. The pastor also commissioned urban missionaries, young people who live in a former convent on the basilica's property and who will develop relationships

with people they encounter on the streets. The missionaries will direct those who need help to social services such as Catholic Charities and invite all to come to the basilica for prayer.

"The basilica is everyone's parish," Father Boric said. "One of the things I most love is that we are a diverse congregation."

The Baltimore priest said the Josephite presence is felt at the basilica every week as a result of an unexpected encounter at the Chrism Mass two years ago at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore. During the liturgy, Father Boric was seated behind a priest who impressed him with how piously he prayed the Mass. The clergyman was Father Thompson, superior general of the Josephites.

"I wanted to know who this priest was," said Father Boric, who introduced himself to Father Thompson following the liturgy. "In our conversation, it came up that he didn't have a regular place to offer Mass on Sunday. I immediately asked him if he would like to come to the basilica."

Since then, Father Thompson has served as a weekend celebrant at America's first cathedral, offering one Mass a week.

"Having Father Thompson at the basilica is such a great blessing to me and to the basilica parish," Father Boric said. "His presence not only keeps the rich tradition of the holy Josephite priests alive at the basilica, but it encourages others to – I hope – join him. What an incredible mission the Josephites have."



People join hands during an April 25, 2016 interfaith prayer service for peace at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore. (CNS photo/Kevin J. Parks, Catholic Review)

# Jubilee banquet highlights 'overwhelming support'



BY KAREN OSBORNE

"I'm the luckiest pastor in the world," said Father Stephen Sohe, SSJ, pastor of Our Lady Star of the Sea in Houston, Texas, proudly drawing attention to the dozen parishioners who accompanied him to Baltimore, Md., for the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

That feeling of gratitude was shared by the hundreds of Josephite priests, brothers and supporters at the Nov. 17 jubilee banquet, held at the Baltimore Convention Center.

Josephites from as far away as California, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas gathered with their parishioners around tables decorated with blue flowers – talking, laughing and sharing happy memories of their parishes and their hopes for the future.

Attendees applauded when their pastors' photographs appeared during a slide show, and cheered at the picture of Father William Norvel, the first African-American Josephite Superior General.

At the end of the evening, all fully-professed priests and brothers were given a commemorative medal of St. Joseph to mark the occasion, and Father Roderick Coates, SSJ, vicar general, presented superior general Father Michael L. Thompson, SSJ, with a papal blessing from Pope Francis.

The Knights of Peter Claver, represented by Supreme Grand Knight James Ellis, announced that the fraternal lay order would be sponsoring a Josephite seminarian's tuition going forward.

"You come because you care, and it's overwhelming to see the support," Father Thompson said. "I ask that you continue to pray heartily for us, as we pray heartily for you."



Father Roderick Coates, SSJ, displays a prayer card commemorating the 125th anniversary of the Josephites. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)

For Maggie Griffin, a Lady of Peter Claver from Pascagoula, Miss., celebrating the Josephites' 125th jubilee in Baltimore was the obvious thing to do. Before the Josephites came to her community, Griffin said, the spiritual needs of Black Catholics there were underserved.

"There was such a need there, and it wasn't being met," she said. "It couldn't have been easy to take that bold step."

Her fellow parishioner Joycelynn Lett agreed.

"This is an experience, a historical event we wanted to be part of," she said. "(The Josephites) allowed us to be a real part of the Catholic Church. They nurtured us. They made our parish just flourish, and I love the experience, all the good Gospel music and the culture."

Brother Herman Johnson, OP, is a graduate of the Josephites' St. Augustine School in New Orleans and attended the banquet in honor of

Father Arthur Colbert, SSJ, whom he credits with fostering his vocation as a Dominican Brother and his career as a professor of Spanish.

"I'm here to give thanks for their generous response to African-American boys," he said. "Their charism shapes people to become who God has called them to be."

Dozens of religious Sisters were also in attendance to thank the Josephites, including the Oblate Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of the Holy Family.

A number of Josephite priests spoke to the audience to celebrate their long journey serving God and their community, including Father Chuck Andrus, SSJ, from Blessed Sacrament - St. Joan of Arc Parish in New Orleans, who said that being a Josephite "is in my bones." In a speech to attendees, he said he was "proud to be Catholic, proud to be an African American, and most assuredly proud to be a Josephite."





James Ellis, Supreme Grand Knight of the Knights of Peter Claver, announces a scholarship for Josephite seminarians Nov. 17 at the Baltimore Convention Center. (Karen Osborne/Special to *The Josephite Harvest*)

In the mid-90s, the Josephites opened their first House of Formation outside the U.S., located in Nigeria, which has brought dozens of priests from Africa to serve the African-American community in the States.

“Those of us who come from Africa, the Josephites have given us the chance to have families in the African-American community. We were there, we are here, and we will go,” said Father Cornelius Ejiogu, SSJ, pastor of St. Luke Catholic Church in Washington, DC, who served as master of ceremonies.

Father Sohe agreed. While his parishioners face some challenges when they get home, rebuilding after a fire and destruction brought by Hurricane Harvey, he believes that together, they’ll succeed.

“It’s a blessing to have [the parishioners] with me,” he said. “I thank them very much to take the time out of their schedules to be here. In the middle of these disasters, these people are here with me. These are the greatest people in the world.”



During a Nov. 17 banquet at the Baltimore Convention Center, Father Roderick Coates, SSJ, presents a papal blessing from Pope Francis to the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart marking the 125th anniversary of the Society’s founding. (Karen Osborne/Special to *The Josephite Harvest*)



During a Nov. 17 banquet at the Baltimore Convention Center, Josephites prepare to receive special medals commemorating 125 years of the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart. (Karen Osborne/Special to *The Josephite Harvest*)



Father Michael Thompson, SSJ, superior general of the Josephites, speaks to a large crowd at a Nov. 17 reception at the Baltimore Convention Center celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Josephites. (Karen Osborne/Special to *The Josephite Harvest*)



Joycelynn Lett of Pascagoula, Miss., greets Sister Mary Alexis Fisher, OSP, during the Nov. 17 banquet at the Baltimore Convention Center honoring the 125th anniversary of the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart. (Karen Osborne/Special to *The Josephite Harvest*)



Members of a combined choir sing at the 125th anniversary celebration of the Josephites at the Baltimore Basilica Nov. 17. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)

# *A celebration 125 years*



Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori blesses the faithful at the end of the Nov. 17 125th anniversary Mass for the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart at the Baltimore Basilica. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)



Father Cornelius Ejiogu, SSJ, serves as master of ceremonies for the Josephites' 125th anniversary banquet at the Baltimore Convention Center. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)



Supporters of the Josephites fill a ballroom at the Baltimore Convention Center Nov. 17. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)



Members of the congregation snap photos as the Nov. 17 opening procession begins at the Baltimore Basilica for the 125th anniversary Mass marking the founding of the Josephites. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)





Members of Our Lady of Grace Church in Reserve, La., pose with their pastor Father Christopher Amadi, SSJ, after a banquet at the Baltimore Convention Center celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Josephites. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)

## *in the making*



Father Michael Thompson, SSJ, superior general of the Josephites, greets Knights of Peter Claver Nov. 17. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)



Father William Norvel, SSJ, former superior general of the Josephites, greets parishioners. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)



Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori chats with Father Joseph Doyle, SSJ. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)



Father Thomas Frank, SSJ, exchanges greetings with parishioners after the 125th anniversary celebration of the Josephites, held Nov. 17 at the Baltimore Basilica. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)



Ladies of Peter Claver exchange the Sign of Peace during the 125th anniversary Mass for the Josephites, Nov. 17 at the Baltimore Basilica. (Karen Osborne/Special to The Josephite Harvest)

# Josephite Harvest provides 13 decades of support



Our readers may recall that the Josephites had already celebrated a 125th anniversary five years ago, commemorating the beginning of the *Colored Harvest* (now *Josephite Harvest*) in 1888 as the official publication of the English Mill Hill Society.

In 1893, the Society allowed its members to choose to remain in the Unites States and form a separate American community or return to Mill Hill or join other dioceses. The five who remained formed the new Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart and assumed editorship of the magazine. It has the historical distinction of being the oldest Catholic mission magazine still publishing in the United States.

From the first page of this four-page folio beamed a shot of the newly-acquired Western Maryland Hotel, destined to be the site for the first Mill Hill priestly formation of American candidates. The rest of the front page carried news of the superior's trips for money appeals and articles on both seminaries. Inside the annual publication, amid devotional articles and accounts of racism, were pleas for support.

"Be a 'Zealator,'"one asked. A person could be given that title for sending 25 new subscriptions at

25 cents each. From its very beginning, *The Harvest* was a major support of the Josephites.

In the late 1800s and the early part of the 20th century, the Josephites used the magazine to appeal to their readers to help in their ministry to the recently emancipated slaves. As time progressed, the Josephites expanded their missions from the

north to the south. *The Harvest* appealed for vocations to the various communities of religious sisters from working in African-American ministry. It sought help from Mother (now Saint) Katharine Drexel in her plans to build churches and schools. The publication reported important advances for Black Catholics, including the founding of the Knights of Peter Claver and the National Black Catholic Congress.

Who can say how many readers have remembered the Josephites in their wills through their interest in our work, gained from *Harvest* accounts of Josephite activity? Or how many vocations to the priesthood have been prompted through stories in *The Harvest* and from vocation tales written by our own seminarians of men on mission?

IN THE LATE 1800S  
AND THE EARLY  
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SLAVES.



The Josephite Harvest is the oldest Catholic mission magazine published in the United States.



## Radio program features Bishop Ricard and Father Thompson

“Catholic Baltimore,” a radio program produced by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, recently featured interviews with Bishop John Ricard, SSJ, rector of St. Joseph’s Seminary in Washington, DC, and Father Michael Thompson, SSJ, superior general of the Josephites.

Bishop Ricard discussed the Josephites’ outreach to Africa to encourage religious vocations and the historic efforts of his society to cultivate religious vocations within the African-American community. Father Thompson discussed the 125-year history of the Josephites and the anniversary celebration.

*To listen to the full program, visit [www.tinyurl.com/radio-ssj](http://www.tinyurl.com/radio-ssj)*



Helena Johnson, a parish elder, and Tayon James, a parish youth, honor ancestors with the “Pouring of Libations” at St. Peter Claver/St. Pius V in Baltimore Nov. 4. (Courtesy St. Peter Claver/St. Pius V)



## Knights of Peter Claver welcome new board members

The Knights of Peter Claver recently elected the following new board members:

**Knights Board:** Corey Jeanlouis, Louisiana State Deputy; James Callahan III, Central States Deputy; Stephen Randall, Supreme Navigator, Meritorious 4th Degree

**Ladies Board:** Micaela LeBlanc, Supreme Lady; Marie L. Johnson, Vice Supreme Lady; Stephanie Skidmore Gallo, Secretary; Donna Williams, Treasurer; Esohe Asemota, Lay Board Member; Cheryl Flotte, National Junior Daughter Counselor; Mable Julien-Taylor, Louisiana State Deputy; Kim Procter, Northern States Deputy; Thayer Sturgis, Gulf Coast Deputy.

## St. Peter Claver and St. Pius V parishes in Baltimore celebrate history and unity

St. Peter Claver and St. Pius V parishes in Baltimore celebrated their history and unity as a community of faith during a special Nov. 4 Mass celebrated by Father Michael Thompson, SSJ, Josephite superior general. The theme for the celebration was “Graced by God’s love, One Lord, One faith, One in the Spirit.”

The two Josephite parishes have long, proud histories. They began sharing the church at St. Peter Claver several years ago after the church at St. Pius V closed. Over the years, ministries have been combined as the two parishes drew closer together.

In his homily, Father Thompson emphasized that the church is not a specific building.

“It’s the people,” he said.

During the Mass, an “Ancestry of Loved Ones Remembrance Book” was blessed and parish elders were honored with the traditional “pouring of libations.”

As part of the celebration, the Father Henry Harper Hall included wall displays of combined parish ministries, historic photographs and facts about the history of St. Peter Claver and St. Pius V parishes.

For more than a month leading up to the liturgy, the parish bulletins featured “did you know” questions about the history of the churches.

# *Los Angeles pastor inspired by parishioners' devotion*

BY ELIZABETH LOWE

As the pastor of an urban Los Angeles parish, Father Kenneth Keke, SSJ, is faced with challenges, but also tremendous opportunities.

“Most of the people we serve are people who have converted to the Catholic Church,” said Father Keke, pastor of St. Brigid. “We have to be able to meet them where they are in order to walk with them. If you understand their backgrounds you can conduct your worship, meet their spiritual needs.”

Father Keke realized his vocation when he was studying at Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka in his native Nigeria. At that time, he was actively involved with campus ministry, which he said is what helped him with his decision to become a priest.

“I used to go from room to room, from hostel to hostel, to speak to students about God,” he said. “That was my primary ministry as a campus minister.”

Father Keke worked as an engineer, specifically in materials and metallurgical engineering, before his ordination. He had planned to join the Redemptorists but that changed when Josephite priests visited Nigeria in 2000.

“What actually got my attraction was the ministry of the Josephites,” Father Keke said. “I had never heard about African Americans. I used to see Black people on TV but the whole story of African Americans – how they came to the United States, how they got their freedom – those things I did not know.

“I was told the story by the first Josephite who came to Nigeria,” Father Keke said. “It got my attention. The story I heard about African Americans was very touching so I wanted to be part of it.”

Father Keke, who came to the



Father Kenneth Keke, SSJ, pastor of St. Brigid in Los Angeles, is shown at a baptism. (Courtesy Father Kenneth Keke, SSJ)

United States in 2005, studied theology at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, DC. Five years later he was ordained a priest and spent three weeks at a parish in Louisiana. From there, he was assigned to his current parish where he served as associate pastor for one year. He then went to Washington, DC, where he served as vocations director for the Josephites. In 2016 he returned to St. Brigid, which today has approximately 500 registered families.

The 45-year-old pastor described St. Brigid as an older Catholic community that is 50 percent Hispanic and 50 percent African American.

Ministries include feeding approximately 70 people each month through the St. Vincent de Paul Society and campaigns to increase awareness about human trafficking. St. Brigid is located in a neighborhood comprised primarily of immigrants.

Through St. Brigid's health ministry the parish organizes health fairs, offers immunizations and seminars focused on mental health. The parish also has a bereavement ministry and is a part of One LA-IAF, a network in Los Angeles County comprised of religious and nonprofit organizations that works

to strengthen its communities.

“I have very, very active parishioners,” Father Keke said. “Some are retired and they are willing to give their time, energy and talents to these ministries. They're living the Gospel.”

Youths are involved in ministries including lectoring, ushering and assisting at Mass as altar servers.

“We have good mentors for them,” he said.

Parishioners are like family, he said, and “they do not shy away from telling me how they feel.”

Not long ago Father Keke had to respond to a particularly tough moment when a young male parishioner committed suicide.

“When I was doing his funeral I didn't know what to say,” Father Keke said. “It was a very challenging time for me, a confusing time. Nobody could understand why that would happen. The grace of God and the spirit of God helped us to deal with it.”

As a former vocations director, he said it is important to get to know the young people. The traditional way of simply talking about vocations is no longer enough.

“You have to have a personal relationship with the young people,” he said.



# 'TOP-NOTCH JOB'

## Gulf Coast parish gets facelift

BY ERIK ZYGMONT

"I would say we've been described as a spirit-filled church – very inviting," said Deacon Gerald Norris of his parish, St. Therese of Lisieux in Gulfport, Miss.

The mid-size neighborhood church has also recently been filled with new flooring, pews, sanctuary seating and other improvements, rendering it a worthy vessel for the spirit within.

"We've always felt the outside was beautiful; we just felt the inside needed to be refreshed," Deacon Norris explained.

Father John McBrearty, SSJ, pastor of St. Therese, has made the project his mission since arriving at the Gulf Coast parish close to a decade ago.

"This is the biggest renovation since the church came into being in 1932," said the 87-year-old priest, speaking in an Irish brogue. "The parishioners are on Cloud 99."

St. Therese's new pews replace donated pews, obtained from three different sources, that had sufficed for so many years.

"Even though it's a nice parish, and a good-looking little church, the left side didn't match the center,

and the center didn't match the right side," Deacon Norris explained.

New carpet was installed inside the nave; the two sacristies were redone in hardwood. New presiders' and altar servers' chairs were placed in the sanctuary. The statuary inside the church was refurbished, as were the two outdoor shrines.

Deacon Norris said the new choir seating is a 180-degree improvement.

"We turned the chairs around to the proper orientation," he said. "Now they're singing to the Lord – they are facing the Lord and the tabernacle."

The new choir chairs also include kneelers, which the old did not have.

A completely redone confessional, including soundproofing and an indicator light (so penitents may enter without fear of interrupting a confession in progress), was a key feature of the renovation.

The remodeled confessional also features "three special pictures," Father McBrearty said, of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son and the Good Shepherd.

The pastor hears confessions

every day, including frequently from other priests.

"I've been told that there are many people throughout the diocese that believe he is one of the best confessors," Deacon Norris explained. "He gets a lot of traffic from outside the parish – it's important to him that the new (confessional) is available."

Deacon Norris said St. Therese's 200-or-so parishioners have been "pinching pennies" for the renovation for almost a decade, but the push really started a year-and-a-half ago.

Father McBrearty said his parishioners have been "very, very generous."

He has also received help from outside the parish, including from his sister-in-law, old friends in Wisconsin, and relatives in New York and California.

"There were many, many contributors," Father McBrearty said.

The \$85,000 project is paid for, and a full-fledged capital campaign was never necessary.

"It's just kind of a top-notch job for a little parish," Deacon Norris said, adding that the renovation should make it even more inviting.

"There's kind of a family feel to it," he said. "We have a lot of people we see who are on their vacations, and they continue to come back."

Ordained five years ago, Deacon Norris, who has a wife and three sons, said he is St. Therese's first vocation, "as far as we can tell."

Father McBrearty celebrated 50 years as a priest June 1.

Bishop Louis F. Kihneman III celebrated Mass at St. Therese and blessed and dedicated the renovations Oct. 7.

"It was very well-attended, a packed house," Father McBrearty said.



Renovations to St. Therese of Lisieux in Gulfport, Miss., included a full overhaul of the church interior and the introduction of uniform pews. (Courtesy Deacon Gerald Norris/St. Therese of Lisieux)

# PAX CHRISTI AWARDS COALITION

## St. Peter Claver parishioner gains international attention for focus on justice

BY GEORGE P. MATYSEK JR.

With angry youths hurling rocks at city police from behind him on the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Retreat Street during the April 27, 2015, riots in Baltimore, Ray Kelly did his best to quell the violence.

Standing with a member of the Maryland House of Delegates, the longtime parishioner of St. Peter Claver Church entreated the young people to stay calm.

The unrest, which included the torching of some buildings and the looting of stores, exploded on the same day as the funeral of Freddie Gray, a Black man who died from injuries sustained in police custody.

“We were there when the fire was blazing at Pennsylvania Avenue,” remembered Mr. Kelly, who had been advocating tirelessly for police reforms and strengthening the civilian review board for five years prior to the uprising. “It was devastating.”

Mr. Kelly helped lead a meeting that lasted late into the night at St. Peter Claver as news of the unrest made international headlines. The next morning, he and other community leaders succeeded in turning out several thousand people who gathered in front of St. Peter Claver to clean up the community. “We had this neighborhood spic

and span within a few hours,” remembered Father Ray Bombberger, SSJ, pastor of St. Peter Claver and St. Pius V Church in Baltimore. “It was something that really needed to be done to restore the pride of the people in their community – and it was all accomplished through Ray’s organization and his connections. After that, he got back to work on the issues that are underneath it all.”

The No Boundaries Coalition, an organization founded by Mr. Kelly in 2010 to bring Baltimoreans together for social justice, was recently honored by Pax Christi International with its 2018 Pax Christi International Peace Award. The prestigious award, given for only the second time to an American during its 30-year history, was presented by South African Bishop Kevin Dowling during a Sept. 15 ceremony at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore. A reception was held at St. Peter Claver, where the No Boundaries Coalition was launched.

“The No Boundaries Coalition is a resident-led advocacy group,” said Mr. Kelly, noting that the non-profit organization he leads focuses on public safety, providing access to healthy food, encouraging community engagement efforts such as voter registration drives and cultivating leadership development.

“Our stated mission is to bring down the boundaries of race, class and neighborhood to build a unified, Center-West Baltimore,” Mr. Kelly said. “Our zip code consists of eight neighborhoods that are diverse financially – from the projects to Bolton Hill, where there are million-dollar Brownstones.”



Ray Kelly, a parishioner of St. Peter Claver in Baltimore and founder of the No Boundaries Coalition, speaks during a Sept. 15 ceremony at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore after receiving the 2018 Pax Christi International Peace award. (Courtesy Pax Christi International)





Ray Kelly exchanges the sign of peace during Mass in 2016 at St. Peter Claver Church in Baltimore. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

## Josephite roots

Mr. Kelly credits his Josephite upbringing for shaping his sense of social justice. His pastor when he was growing up at St. Peter Claver, Father Joseph Del Vecchio, SSJ, became one of his brightest guiding lights.

“I didn’t have an actual father in my life,” remembered Mr. Kelly, 48. “He definitely stood in that role. My mother would call on him for discipline in high school. He was big on making you do service work if you did something wrong – trimming the bushes at the church, cleaning out the moat or something like that.”

Father Del Vecchio coached basketball and baseball, serving as a constant presence throughout Mr. Kelly’s life.

“He wanted me to focus on the Beatitudes and making sure that I was feeding people and helping people and housing people,” said Mr. Kelly, noting that the pastor was also his Confirmation sponsor. “He was a big influence on what I projected as I took on the role of a leader.”

Josephites have a profound connection to the people they serve, Mr. Kelly said, because they



Ray Kelly poses with his daughter, Christen, and his mentor, the late Father Joseph Del Vecchio, SSJ, in a photo from five years ago. (Courtesy Ray Kelly)

live in the very neighborhoods they serve, experiencing some of the same joys and challenges of those communities.

“I was always aware that these priests have lived in our community longer than we have,” he said. “They have a tradition that goes back 125 years.”

In his work with the No Boundaries Coalition, Mr. Kelly thinks of the example of the late Father Del Vecchio and other Josephites. His group has had much success – outgrowing St. Peter Claver and moving into a larger engagement center within the last year. In that time, Mr. Kelly said, the organization helped 37 people get jobs, find treatment centers for drug and alcohol dependency, get identification cards and more.

“It seems like a menial number,” Mr. Kelly said, “but that’s 37 lives that could have been victim to violence. They are no longer on the street corner. We’re here at the center of impact of everything that’s going on in Baltimore and we’re still able to save lives and help people.”

The No Boundaries Coalition has also demanded accountability. It created the West Baltimore Community Commission on Police Misconduct, which documents and presents stories of citizen interactions with the Baltimore police department. The coalition published a document on police misconduct in 2016 that was cited by the U.S. Department of Justice and reported to the United Nations.

Father Bomberger described Mr. Kelly as a “true leader for the church and the community.”

“His dedication and commitment to justice issues really challenges all of us to stretch and look at our responsibility as a Church to the community at large,” the pastor said. “He’s just been amazing in his energy and his zeal. He gets tired, but he keeps coming back.”

# NEW HOME FOR OUR RETIRED

## Senior Josephites complete the circle in new living arrangements

BY ERIK ZYGMONT

Having recently taken up residence at St. Joseph’s Seminary in Washington, DC, nine retired Josephites have commenced an unexpected ministry to the Josephite priests-in-training who also reside at the seminary while studying at The Catholic University of America.

“(The retirees) provide some modeling for these young men – it’s very beneficial,” said Bishop John H. Ricard, SSJ, rector of St. Joseph’s Seminary. “In many ways, the two groups separated by decades are joined by the same sense of mission as God’s people, which is serving the African-American community with the spirit of love, caring and concern.”

The retired Josephites, most in their 80s and 90s, have been living at St. Joseph’s since early July, Bishop Ricard said.

“The decision was made because the seminary has the space and the capacity to house these guys,” he said.

Father Paul Oberg, SSJ, rector of the Josephite Senior Residence, the facility-within-a-facility at St. Joseph’s Seminary, said the men are “adjusting pretty well,” though he acknowledged the move is no small change.

“In your 90s, it’s hard to change, but they do change,” he said. “They are coming from a small facility to a larger facility with more activity,” he added, noting that in addition to the seminarians and retirees, St. Joseph’s Seminary houses administrative offices and Paulist Fathers awaiting the completion of their own facility.

“That’s a lot of excitement,” Father Oberg said. “Most of them are 95-percent happy.”

The retirees live on the second floor of the seminary. Each man has a suite, which includes a bedroom and a study, as well as a private shower.

Father Oberg said the men arise at “their own personal time,” which is for many is quite early, 5 a.m. or even 4:30 a.m. They say their personal prayers, and then meet as a group at 7:20 a.m.

for Josephite prayer. Daily Mass is at 7:30 a.m.

“There are six priests who celebrate the Mass,” Father Oberg said. “It gives everyone a chance, although some are not well enough to say Mass – they can’t stand up or have other issues.”



Brother Charles Douglas, SSJ, a resident of the new Josephite retirement home at St. Joseph’s Seminary, continues his ministry by serving as sacristan at daily Mass. (Courtesy Randy Staines)

Josephite Brother Charles Douglas also attends daily Mass and serves as a sacristan, Father Oberg said.

After Mass, the men eat breakfast and relax; some read the morning newspaper.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, a religious sister from the Daughters of Charity leads a half hour of exercise.

“She volunteers her time,” Father Oberg said.

Much of the day is spent accommodating the nuts

and bolts of aging. A certified nurse assistant is on site every day from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., except Sundays. The assistant helps with laundry and cleaning, and distributes medication three times a day. The men are shuttled to doctor’s appointments.

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BISHOP JOHN RICARD, SSJ

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Father Oberg said the whole group, retirees and seminarians, attend adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and make a Holy Hour on Tuesday evenings.

There are two additional retirees under Father Oberg's care. He visits one man three times a week at Sacred Heart Home in Washington, DC. He keeps in touch with the other, who retired to Saginaw, Mich., by telephone.

Bishop Ricard observed that much of the interaction between the younger and older men occurs at mealtimes.

"Sometimes the (retirees) need a little help," Bishop Ricard said. "The students will help."

The 10 Josephite seminarians live on the third floor of the seminary, just above the retirees. While they spend most of the day studying at Catholic University, their downtime is at the seminary.

"There's a deep respect on either side – the students and the senior priests – of their own space, so to speak, and their separate needs," Bishop Ricard said, adding that the arrangement, like the rest of the "common mission" the men have as Josephites, is "not without sacrifice."

"I think, because of the Eucharist and the Word of God, it has worked out well."

On a recent afternoon, Bishop Ricard noticed some of the retired Josephites watching from the second-floor balcony as the seminarians played soccer on the seminary grounds.

"In America, we've gotten accustomed to isolating the aged from the rest of the population," he said. "This is an invitation for the young people to interact with the aging, and to see them at work."

JOSEPHITES.ORG

# Washington Sodality Union marks 100 years

The Archdiocese of Washington Sodality Union celebrated its centennial with a special Mass celebrated by Washington Auxiliary Bishop Roy Edward Campbell, Jr., Oct. 6 at the St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, DC. The liturgy was preceded by the recitation of the rosary.

"The Sodality Union was one of the earliest Catholic Church organizations that provided racial integration, just as the Ladies of Charity did," said Father Thomas Frank, SSJ, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Washington, DC and consultor general for the Josephites.

Father Frank concelebrated the Mass, as did Father Cornelius K. Ejiogu, SSJ, pastor of St. Luke in Washington and academic dean at St. Joseph Seminary in Washington.

Patricia McGuire, president of Trinity University in Washington, was the keynote speaker at a luncheon reception held at Washington Navy Yard Catering and Conference Center.

The union consists of approximately 67 affiliate parish sodalities, including Josephite parishes. It provides support as parishes promote Marian devotion and spiritual activities.



Members of the Archdiocese of Washington Sodality Union participate in an Oct. 6 100th anniversary Mass at the St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, DC. (Courtesy Melody Atkinson)

# Development leader hopes to help strengthen Josephite ministries

BY GEORGE P. MATYSEK JR.

Jackie Thomas-Suggs believes the Josephites are doing incredible work ministering in the African-American community in parishes, schools and a variety of other outreach initiatives that touch lives in profound ways.

The difficulty is that their work often goes unheralded, with many people not even realizing who the Josephites are or that their rich legacy stretches back 125 years.

The newly appointed chief development officer for the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart wants to help change that.

“Much as other orders are doing, I think the Josephites need to toot their horns a little more,” said Ms. Thomas-Suggs, who lamented that although she is an African-American cradle Catholic who knew of many other religious communities, she didn’t hear of the Josephites until a decade ago.

The inherent humility of the Josephites, reflected in an attitude of “putting their heads down and working really hard without recognition” is to be commended, Ms. Thomas-Suggs said. But strengthening the Society’s identity and raising awareness can encourage more people to provide the financial support that will keep the society’s ministries going, she said.

“I think the 125th anniversary is a great time to reach out to mainstream media so they can talk about Josephites and the fact that they have been around as long as they have,” she said. “I think in local parishes, we need to look for opportunities to let people know what the Josephites do and what their mission is.”

Ms. Thomas-Suggs brings a track record of success in fundraising and advancement. Her more than 35 years of experience includes work with the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, the Paulists, the American Lung Association, the NAACP, James Madison University, Howard University, Fisk University, the United Service Organization and the Association for Professional Educators of the Deaf.

At the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Ms. Thomas-Suggs secured a three-year, multi-million-dollar grant from The Ford Foundation and a \$1.5 million grant from California State Department of Immigration and Refugee Services. She increased revenue by 112 percent at the Paulists by securing



Jackie Thomas-Suggs is the Josephites' chief development officer.

foundation support, developing an accountable planned giving program and revitalizing the annual fund. At the NAACP, Ms. Thomas-Suggs said, she increased annual revenue from \$12 million to \$16 million in one year.

With the Josephites, Ms. Thomas-Suggs expects to help increase revenues and make sure the Society is using best practices in fundraising.

“Our revenues are challenging,” she said, “and I think we have opportunities to look at the ways we’ve been doing business and to see ways that we can improve.”

She foresees greater outreach to Josephite parishioners and direct mail supporters to talk with them about the needs of the Society.

“My job will be to let them know what our needs are and to help them understand all the ways they can help the Josephites besides sending us a check every now and then,” Ms. Thomas-Suggs said. “I want to help them think about a future gift or major gift, or look at ways they can sustain us monthly.”

Instead of sending general support, donors might consider sponsoring a seminarian or directing their dollars to some other targeted purpose, she said.

“We are going to have to get out and get to know our donors on a one-to-one basis,” Ms. Thomas-Suggs said.

The graduate of Howard University in Washington, DC, also hopes to encourage Josephites to be more involved in fundraising – making phone calls to share news of their ministry and to raise awareness about various needs.

“The most important thing we can do is to be visible and available to our supporters and people who are interested in the work we do,” she said.



# REQUIESCAT IN PACE

## Father John Edward O'Hallaran, SSJ

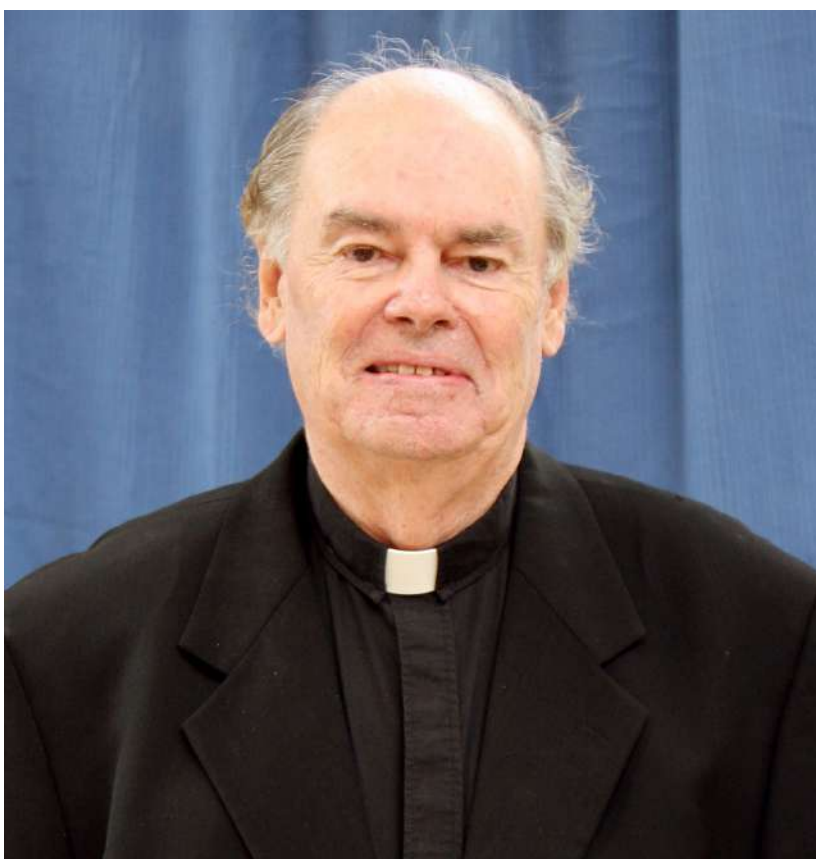
Father John Edward O'Hallaran, SSJ died Sept. 2 in Asbury Park, N.J., after a short illness. He had been a professed Josephite Brother for 18 years and an ordained priest for 33 years. He was 81.

Father O'Hallaran was born in Jersey City, N.J., Nov. 24, 1937, the only child of John and Harriet Fitzgerald O'Hallaran, who are previously deceased. Educated at Holy Spirit School in Asbury Park, N.J., and Red Bank Catholic High School in Red Bank, N.J., he entered the Josephite Brothers' novitiate in 1961.

After First Profession, the following year, he taught at St. Joseph's Industrial School in Clayton, Del., and then entered Xavier University in New Orleans, La. After graduation he continued as a parish minister at Sacred Heart in Port Arthur, Texas; Holy Family in Natchez, Miss.; Blessed Sacrament, New Orleans; and Our Mother of Mercy Center in Washington, DC.

After ordination as a priest, following studies at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, Father O'Hallaran served as assistant pastor at Corpus Christi Parish in New Orleans, where he later also served twice as pastor. Father O'Hallaran was also pastor of St. Lucy Church in Houma, La, and St. Luke in Thibodeau, La. He was pastor of St. Raymond, St. Joan of Arc and St. David parishes in New Orleans.

Father O'Hallaran was pastor of Holy Family Parish in Natchez, and finally, at Immaculate Conception parish in Lebeau, La., before retiring to St Joseph Manor in



Baltimore, Md., in 2016. He had recently retired to Asbury Park, where he succumbed to a brief sickness.

In addition to his parish duties, Father O'Hallaran loved sports, and he used his priestly ministry to stay close to those who made sports their living, according to an obituary in *The Clarion Herald* in New Orleans.

He was an avid hockey fan, serving as the unofficial chaplain of the minor league New Orleans Brass hockey team, the newspaper reported. He baptized and confirmed defenseman Steve Cheredaryk in 2001 after conducting catechism classes with him.

While serving in New Orleans, Father O'Hallaran also celebrated a Sunday morning 10 a.m. Mass during the November through March racing season at the Fair Grounds for a small band of jockeys, trainers, owners and other track employees, according to *The Clarion Herald*.

Father O'Hallaran is predeceased by his "embraced" family: Dominga, Evelyn-Sophia, Iris, Maribel and Edwin Rodriguez.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Father O'Hallaran was held Sept. 7 at St. James Church in Red Banks, N.J. Burial was at St. Joseph Cemetery in Clayton, Del. May his priestly soul be at rest.

# February 18 to March 19

## *Join the Josephites for the 30 Day Novena*

St. Joseph is always there when we need help! We know that's true. *Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, was chosen by God to be the protector of the Holy Family. He is our protector, too.*

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

The Josephites have a special devotion to St. Joseph. He is their patron. ***St. Joseph has been the Josephites' beacon for more than 125 years of ministry in the African-American community.*** With your assistance and support, Josephites serve in parishes, schools and special ministries in the African-American areas of our country every day.

The Feast of St. Joseph, March 19, is special celebration for Josephites. It is their sacred custom to *prepare for this feast by invoking St. Joseph for 30 days for special intentions and those of their 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 Josephites petition St. Joseph, by his sufferings, sorrows and joys, to hear our requests and carry them to God's throne on high.

Join your petitions with all Josephites during preparation for the Saint Joseph feast day.

Visit [www.josephite.org](http://www.josephite.org) to learn more about the **Thirty Day Prayer**. It's that simple.

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 in these 30-days of prayer.  
***Thank you for your devotion to St. Joseph!***

### St. Joseph Prayer for Protection

St. Joseph, you are the faithful protector of and intercessor for all who love and venerate you. I have special confidence in you, for you are all-powerful with God and will never abandon your faithful servants. I humbly invoke you and commend myself with all who are dear to me to your protection and intercession. Do not abandon me or them during life, and assist me and them when we die. Amen.





# Josephites are counting on END-OF-YEAR DONORS

Generous donors have been essential to the Josephites successful history in the United States. With the help of countless donations, the Josephites have ministered in the African-American community for generations.

“All donations are important, especially during this time of financial uncertainty,” said Father Nelson Moreira, SSJ, who has served as Josephite treasurer for 18 years. “The end of year is a great time to feel good about donating, and you can get a good tax write off, too.”

The Josephites encourage donations year-round with several efforts. The “Sustaining Partners” program encourages donors to contribute monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually.

“That’s growing,” Father Nelson said. “The donor gets to choose when the donation happens and the dollar amount based on their circumstances.”

The Josephites also conduct direct mail appeals.

“We see a need for direct mail but it doesn’t produce what it has in the past,” said Father Moreira. He said the biggest response is to the St. Joseph appeal in March but the Christmas appeal is a close second.

He said online donations – which can be done conveniently at [www.josephite.org](http://www.josephite.org) or by responding to one of the eblasts – are growing, but the needs continue to grow, too.

As a religious community, all active priests turn over their compensation to the society while serving in parishes and schools. However, there are now only 40 Josephites in active ministry. They are supporting the retired Josephites, some of whom are living in a nursing home, and they are also supporting the men who are in formation to become priests.

“Supporting our elderly men is a major expense,”

Father Nelson said. “Health costs have gone up and the number of Josephites to support them has gone down. The Josephites who are in service bring in about \$489,925 per year and that’s just not enough to cover the costs of the retired men and those studying to become priests.”

So direct mail, Sustaining Partners and online giving are essential for the financial viability of the Josephites.

Father Nelson also encouraged friends of the Josephites to remember the society in their will. “Bequests are an important way to support our ministry,” Father Moreira said, noting that he receives about 10 bequest each year.

“2018 is the 125th year we have served those who were most in need,” Father Moreira said, “and now we need help.”

So, when making your list and checking it twice, please add the Josephites to your end-of-year giving plan.

## END-OF-YEAR GIVING Make a difference in 2018

Historically, religious groups are the biggest recipients of charitable dollars, with 32 percent of funds going to faith-based activities. The second largest pool for donations is education, with 16 percent.

**For churches, end-of-year giving is growing and vitally important as noted by these statistics:**

### 30%

of annual giving occurs in December.

### 10%

of annual giving occurs on the last three days of the year.

### 77%

believe everyone can make a difference by donating.

### 64%

of donations are made by women.

# FACES & PLACES

## School named in honor of Virginia parishioner

The first new school built in Alexandria, Va, in nearly two decades bears the name of a parishioner of St. Joseph Parish in Alexandria who was a pioneer in Civil Rights and education.

Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School opened this fall following a ribbon-cutting ceremony Aug. 30.

Born in 1918 in Alexandria, Mr. Day attended Parker-Gray School through eighth grade before continuing his secondary education in the Washington, DC, public school system since Alexandria did not provide formal high school education for Blacks of that era.

Mr. Day earned a bachelor's degree in geography and history, but was unable to teach in his hometown because of his race. He worked in the State Department as a foreign officer.

Mr. Day was appointed to the Alexandria City School Board a decade after the Brown vs. Board of Education decision desegregating schools. He was the first African American elected chair of a public school board in Virginia.

Gwen Day-Fuller, Mr. Day's daughter and a parishioner of St. Joseph, noted at the ribbon-cutting ceremony that her father had a deep love for his church, his family and his community.

"I think education was his first love," she said. "He fought to be sure it was equitable and available to all."

Ms. Day-Fuller said she was humbled to see her father's name on the school building. It's an honor he deserved, she said.



A historical display at Ferdinand T. Day School in Virginia tells the story of the civil rights pioneer for which it is named. (Courtesy Phyllis L. Johnson)





# CONTINUING THE MISSION

## Whoever wishes to be my disciple



FATHER DONALD M. FEST, SSJ

As Jesus was walking the face of the earth, he was training folks to be his disciples. He taught many things. One that comes to mind is we have to pick up our cross every day if we want to be a disciple.

How well do we carry our crosses? At this time of the year we think of Mary and Joseph. Chosen for such a great mission, they did not have it



An image of the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the infant Christ is shown in a Christmas card promoted by the Josephites. (Courtesy Josephites)

easy. Mary had to suffer ridicule for saying “yes” to God. Joseph had to trust the God who spoke to him in dreams – trusting that it would all work out. I’m sure he wondered on the road to Bethlehem if God was with him, especially when he could not find a place for Mary to have her holy child. Sometimes we might have the same thoughts. But we go on – trusting that God has us in his hand.

On one occasion Jesus compared worldly rulers with those who are to be his disciples. His disciples were not to act like these worldly leaders who “make their authority felt” over those entrusted to their care. He says that the greatest among you is the one who serves the needs of all – and the one who wants to be first is to be the slave of all.

Have you ever given that some thought? When I pondered it, I thought of parish leaders, those who have been chosen or appointed to lead people in their group or organization.

Think of it. The job of the leader, chairperson, president or whatever title the person may have is a most important position. They have two functions. One is to faithfully maintain the charism of the group or organization, to keep it on point with the mission that is theirs. The other function is to help the membership have the opportunity

to be involved with the mission of the group. That is what helps the parish move on and tend to the many tasks which need attention.

For that to happen Jesus makes it clear – don’t “lord it over them” like worldly leaders do. A real

leader or disciple serves by meeting the needs of all those entrusted to his or her care.

We are disciples of Jesus. For this to happen we must always be aware of how conscientious we are about those things we do every day. Are we following the guidelines of our teacher and Lord?

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

“A REAL LEADER  
OR DISCIPLE  
SERVES BY  
MEETING THE  
NEEDS OF  
ALL THOSE  
ENTRUSTED TO  
HIS OR HER CARE.”



# JOSEPHITE PERPETUAL ENROLLMENTS



## FOR THE LIVING AND THE DECEASED JULY, AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2018

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.

Davis, Herman M.	Kreitzberg, Richard Anthony	Wehrs, Mary Ann	Velazquez, Antonia P. (Family)
Karp, Dorothy	Kreitzberg/Kirkpatrick, John A.	Wetmore, Yuriko Tsutsumi	Velazquez, Grace P. (Family)
Most Forgotten Soul	Mahoney, Monica	Williams, Evelyn	Velazquez, Jose D.C. (Family)
Stammers, Janet	Mercier, Charles	Zagada, Manuel R.	Velazquez, Jose M. (Family)
Acevedo, Leopoldo B.	Mercier, Shirley	Schulkes, Mary	Velazquez, Lawrence (Family)
Adansi-Bona, Dominique B.	Mercier, Wendy	Farinoso, Francis	Velazquez, Philip P. (Family)
Altamia, Manuel	My Friend "C"	Mota, Anthony Joseph	Velazquez, Raphael A. (Family)
Altamia, Socorro	Our New Priest	Preciado, Maria H.	Velazquez, Thomas (Family)
Ayd, Dennis A.	Plizga, Erika P.	Preciado, Merced	Zurbrick, Donna L.
Belec, Theresa (Family)	Plummer, Fred	Preciado, Ramona	Borgman, Janet Clare
Bell, Charles	Pultz, Chris	Quagliato, Joseph	Epps, Lady Melba
Coffinan, Mark Thomas (Tom)	Reed, Mary	Abbott, Mark	Meicodel, Beatrice
Domingo, Jr., Urbano G.	Robinson, Josephine (Family)	Abbott, Patricia	Matysiak, Craig
Enama, Mary Anne (Family)	Shaffer, Sandi	Brandan, Anne	Matysiak, Frank
Foley, Dagmar	Siceloff, Rev.Fr., John C.	Browne, Nora	O'Donoghue, Mary
Ginger, Gileah B.	Smith, Brad	Clark, Danny	Packwood Family
Ginger, James J.	Smith, Charles	Clark, Dennis	Benson, Marie D.
Guererro, Monlita Z.	Smith, Jack Anthony	Degnan, Veronica (Family)	Carpentieri, Concetta
Hamilton, James	Smith, Sarah	Green, Herbert M.	Carpentieri, Emilio
Hedderman, Lori	Stokes, Ruth Hamlin	Haugh, Claire	Carpentieri, Gaetano
Hedderman, Tony	Struttmann, Joan	Healy, Michael	Creamer, Joseph
Kirkpatrick, AJ	Sweet, Cecelia Patricia	Lambert, Virginia	Krivsky, Susan (Benson)
Kissler, Dean	Sweet, Jerome Elliott	Miller, Mark	McCann, William
Kissler, Shane Jude	Tincher Family	Moreland, Yvette	
Kreiss, Claudia	Unspecified	Papcun, Trevor	
Kreitzberg, Anthony	Unspecified #2	Parker, Grace C. (Family)	
Kreitzberg, Brian & Sue (Family)	Wehrs, Don	Ritzik, Joseph L.	
		Stepian, Anne	

# JOSEPHITE

## PERPETUAL ENROLLMENTS

### Continued

McKenna, Abe	Richards/Kreitzberg, Charla Dee	Arias, Savannah	Lynch, Nikol
McKenna, Eleanor	Seabrook, Bradley	Baird, Jeffrey T.	Lynch, Robert
Nehill, Arthur F.	Seabrook, ED.D., Harold L.	Galletta, Benjamin Nathan	Miller, Mildred
Roberti, Lee	Seabrook, Katie L.	Galletta, Wendolyn Bridget	Castelli, Rose
Roberti, Louis	Garnett, Ann	Martino, Dolores A.	Cook, Linda
Williams, Joyce Mills	Garnett, Judith	Ames, Elizabeth Browning	Cook, Patricia
Wilson, Sally	Hartline, Christopher (Family)	Bragg, Art	Costello, Maryann
Daino, Bill	Smallwood, Margaret	Johnson, Doloris	Costello, Michael
Daino, Dan	Adams, Sr., Levy	Bustamante, Daniel Joseph	Egide, Allen
Daino, Joe	Cook, Lia	Carrier, Dr., Loran	Font, Joseph
Kozak, Joan	Hedderman, Declan	Garcia, Mike F.	Font, Kay
McHale, Dorothy DeSales F.	Isles, Darrin	Angelino, Alphonse	Gasper, James (Family)
McHale, Jr., Peter Joseph	Isles, Marg Francine	Araya, Fernando	Hollenbaugh, Galen
Reyes, Milagros Z.	Kniedler, Julia	Avila, Peter	Hollenbaugh, Martin
Williams, Lee & JoAnn (Family)	Bucari, Mary Lou	Barbarin, Gloria	Krebs, Mary Ann
Adams, Gustavia	Wahal, Ann	Cosenza, Beatrice	Rojewski, Michael
Fisk, Marg	Burkins, Mildred J.	Doggan, John	Scrima, Delma Ann
Galletta, Anne	Comey Family	Douglas, Rosalie	Scrima, Jr., James V.
Gaver, Mitch	Di Ienno, Kathleen D.	Fernandez, Alex	Dalmacio, Sr., Valentin A.
Giannini, Richard	Duhadaway, Jr., Lawrence H.	Forstrom, Melanie Ann	Pascua, Darwin D.
Hawkins, William	Gilyot, Clea	George, John	Pascua, Geoffrey D.
Imes, Kristi Lynn	Hansen, Aurelia L.	Holbrook, Jr., Donald L.	Pascua, Leodegaria
Janak, Rev., Gary W.	Hutnyan, Melba M.	Johanson, Maryann	Pascua, Rodolfo M.
Lenhard, Frederick E. (Family)	Jackson, Penny Christine	Johnson, Shona L.	Pascua, Ruben M.
Lenhard, James P.	Johnson, Donnie	Keeler, Cardinal, William H.	Bohan Family
Lenhard, Theresa	Kipp, Rose M.	Kelly, Priscilla	Castello, Jr., Freddie O.
Lozano, Laura	Miller, Mildrio	Kersey, Bonaventura A.	Eckrosh, Sr., Fred J.
Madison, Florence	Sambronne, Sr., Freddie J.	Larks, Harry Wilson	Nagy, Audrey
Madsen, Jimmy	Stipes, Jr., Torin J.	Maddox, Timothy	Nagy, Paul
Rose, Donald G.	Stoopes, William D.	McElroy, Robert	Veasey, Robert
Smith, Aurelia C.	Tobin, Jr., John H.	Motte, Joseph	Brady, Robert
Borowski, Josephine	Brown, Ella	Neale, Dorothy	Gladney, Richard
Borowski, Marian	Ewens, Peter & Carole	Olson, Katharine	Rodriguez, Hector A.
Joseph, Rose	LaCroix, Molly	Pemberton, Robert	Ballesteros, Jose
Hayes, Jr., Duralph	Loftus, Thomas M.	Salas, Dr., Ramon	Valenzuela, Alejandro
Joseph, Marie Rose	Weinmuller, Chloe	Shattell, Anthony J.	Davis, Lois
Kreitzberg, Stephen Charles	Weinmuller, Daisy	Sr. M. Majella Neale, OSP	Day, Rosemary
Kreitzberg/Peterson, Donna C.	Weinmuller, Josie	Taft, Nathaniel	Foran, Timothy (M/M)
Kreitzberg/Smith, Dee Ann M.	Hayes, Raymond F.	Torres, Armando	Foran, Anthony & Rita
Larks, Harry	Johnson, Benedict	Williams, Florence V.	Foran, Tim
Lo Presti, Antonino	Johnson, Donnie	York, Walter	Butler, Harold
Lo Presti, Maria Gullo	Joseph, Phillip	Campbell, JoAnn	Adams, Bryan
	Sambrone, Sr., Freddie J.	Davis, James	Brady, Carol Ann
	Adams, Lorraine Sayas	Dorgan, Donald	Brady, Timothy
		Hayes, Duralph	Brady, Matthew
		Lynch, Donna	



# SPECIAL REMEMBRANCES



The perpetual enrollment of a living or deceased loved one in the Josephite Society is a lasting commemoration. The person enrolled enjoys special remembrances in Masses for benefactors, said by all Josephites. Special Masses are said on every First Friday. Novenas of Masses are said in honor of St. Joseph and the Little Flower, for the Poor Souls and at Christmas. The offering (\$10 for each person enrolled) is used for the education of future Josephite priests, for the operation of parishes and schools, and for corporal and spiritual works of mercy undertaken by the Josephite Society.

To enroll someone you love, use the form below or contact:

The Josephite Mission Office  
911 W. Lake Avenue, Suite B • Baltimore, MD • 21210  
1-844-249-5730 • [www.josephites.org](http://www.josephites.org)

## Perpetual Enrollment Form

(Please print all information)

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Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Individual Living.....\$10    ☐ Individual Deceased .....\$10    ☐ Family....\$50

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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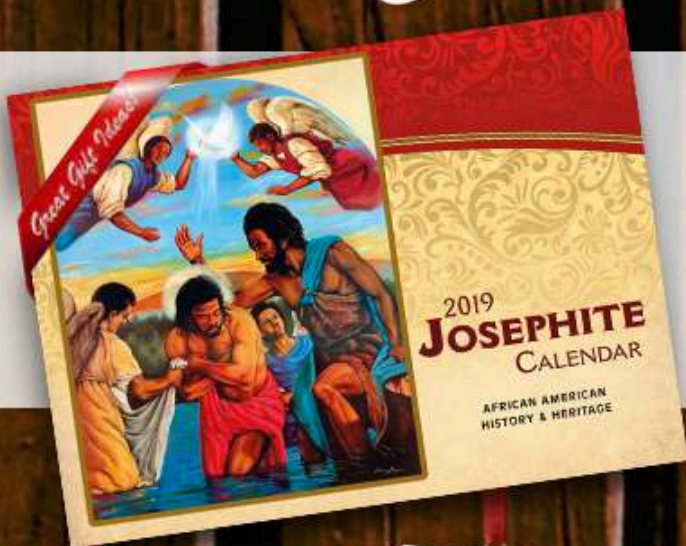
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