K
owning that one has made a difference in others’
reflections. I constantly tell another great
gift that I have is knowing that I made a negative difference in someone’s
difficulty. A sorrow comes when I think of people who have been
depressed or hurt or driven away from the Church.

A second sorrow comes when I think of people who have
done me wrong. The unwarranted attacks and slanders
are a poor way to calculate the value of one’s priestly
ministry. For some, they might work; but I can’t do it
my way.

Nor are the dead in the memory of the Church, so I know a
stronger motive of ministry than the love of the Church and
desire to help out with the nitty-gritty stuff so that we
have a chance to talk with anyone who wishes to return to
the Church.

As soon as I prayed that, I knew what the next reflection
would be: the joys and sorrows of the priesthood.

The joys of the priesthood are a single greatest joy:
helping others grow in holiness. As soon as I prayed that,
I shared a little bit of the opening prayer truly does capture what is
my calling. “May the growth of your people in
the Church and parishes might flourish. The parish staffs,
meeting the funeral director in potter’s field along
the Cross...”

A third sorrow comes when I think of people who
have ever come together! Baptism and weddings are lots of fun, especially
right now, I’d shoot you.”

A benefactor recently wrote and said her son and daughter-in-law were coming back to the Church. She
expressed the hope that their parish priest would be
compassionate. “In the name of God why should we have
to have that hope in the first place?”

The above sorrows could easily be summarized by
reflecting on the largeness or smallness of one’s world,
the widening or narrowing of one’s vision, whether on
people willing to serve your people, the Body of Christ.

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The human story is the same for everyone. We are born, we live, we yearn for great love and happiness even if we do not find it. We die, both sad and joyful to be gone. Only the details of each human life differ. The essays of Father Herb Yost, C.S.C., that follow this Preface are for the human being in every man and woman who lives here and now. We are part of a great assembly of pilgrims whitewashing through space and planet earth at breath-taking speeds, but all too often only going around in circles seemingly getting nowhere. Why did God make me? It is a question I sometimes hear from children and. Yes, I recall the answer, ‘God made me to know him and love him in this world, and to be happy with him forever in the next.’ Fr. Yost’s essays are but commentary on that line, plain talk for simple folk, and earned wisdom for everyone about Christian living.

And from one of Fr. Herb’s long-time readers

‘I have been receiving and reading Holy Cross Crosslinks newsletter for about ten years now, and look forward to the arrival of each issue.

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From the preface of Waiting in Joyful Hope by noted author Fr. Nicholas Ayo, C.S.C.

Greetings, my friend!

Well, this page is the last piece of writing I have to do before heading to North Carolina for a couple weeks vacation with my folks. The reflection inside and the 4th page are done.....Jim Krause has been working on the book order form...somewhat it will all come together and the result is what you hold in your hands now. These newsletter really are a cooperative effort. Carol and Kim address the envelopes, Ave Maria Press does the newsletter printing, Oakley Press did the All Souls memorial cards, Lighting Life prints the envelopes themselves, a mailing company also does the inserting, the Post Office brings this to your mailbox, benefactors send me the page 4 laffs, and the Holy Spirit helps me with the inside reflection. A lot of people (and one Dove) worked to produce this newsletter.

Thanks for all the good comments on the last newsletter (a reflection on my vocation as a priest). It caught me by surprise. Maybe it is because folks are not that familiar with the inner workings of a priest’s life, of how he gets called, etc. Since Pope Benedict declared this to be the Year for Priests, these reflections are my way of fulfilling his desire. What you’ll find inside are some reflections on my joys and sorrows as a priest. These are just general thoughts...obviously, there are lots more joys and sorrows that would take several volumes to fill.

And speaking of volumes (how ’ya like that expression?), order lots of books, OK? I am dreaming in my own very humble way of the Nobel and the Pulitzers and the other biggie!! Seriously, this was an interesting undertaking. What really surprised me (and continues to surprise me) is how nervous I am about the whole thing. Can’t figure out why. Maybe some of you who remember your first book can enlighten me.

Back to priesthood for a second. One thing I omitted in the last newsletter was the Final Profession and Discretionary Ordination of Gerry Olinger, CSC, and Kevin Grove, CSC. This took place on August 29 and 30. They will be ordained to the priesthood on the Saturday after Easter.

There is one new member of the Development Office, and a very important one at that. Mr. Terry Morrow has been appointed Director of Development. Terry brings a wide range of experience to this work. All of us know Terry well, and are happy to be working with him.

One other huge change I forgot to mention in the last newsletter. At the Provincial Chapter in June, it was unanimously approved that the Eastern Province of Priests would merge with the Indiana Province in 2010. This will result in one United States Province of Priests. This was one of the reasons for Terry’s appointment.

And now, of course, comes another reason for this newsletter: the Novemder Remembrances of your loved ones who have died. If you would like us to wrap our prayers around yours, jot the names of your beloved dead on the prayer card and return it to us. No offering is required, but should you choose to include one, know that it will be deeply appreciated. It will be used for our education and health care needs of the oldest and youngest members of the Holy Cross community.

Running out of space now. I’d make the type smaller, but then we older folks would have a difficult time reading it. Can’t have that! Carol and Kim, plus Jim, Terry, Nancy, and Beata join me in wishing you all the best, and in thanking you for your gracious generosity in these difficult economic times. You folks are something else again!!!

Pray faithfully, laugh often, love deeply!