Our Philanthropic Mission: Uniting those who are called to be witnesses of Christ's love and stewards of His gifts, with our mission to proclaim the Kingdom of God to all.
My dear friends in Christ,

It can be said that since the time the Congregation of Holy Cross received its papal approbation, or approval as a religious congregation in 1857, we have been involved in immigration, both as immigrants in foreign lands and in providing ministerial care for migrant populations. Perhaps our own experience as migrants gave us a unique sensitivity to others who find themselves strangers, often unwanted and misunderstood, in foreign lands.

Immigration has been an issue in the United States for years and there are no easy answers as to how our country can most effectively address the myriad of concerns. Legal, economic, political and cultural issues are important factors in the discussion, but too often we are fed sound bites of strong and biased opinions that reflect just one or two elements of the conversation.

For the Catholic Church, immigration embodies legal, economic, political and cultural issues, but transcends these with the truth it has professed for 2000 years. Our concern for the dignity inherent in every human life and the care of the marginalized and for those whose God-given rights are not respected.

As the debate regarding immigration continues, it behooves each of us to know what our Church professes and, as friends and collaborators of Holy Cross, to understand how our charism is made manifest in day-to-day ministry to migrants. This issue of Pillars will help accomplish this goal.

Rev. Dan Groody, C.S.C., has invested most of his life studying, teaching and in ministering to migrants. His award-winning documentary, “Dying to Live,” is but one example of the fruits of his ministry. Fr. Dan provides for us an overview of the Church’s teaching on immigration in his feature, “The Church and Immigration: Reflections of a Pilgrim People.”

Rev. Marc Fallon, C.S.C., and Rev. Matt Kuczora, C.S.C., provide glimpses of Holy Cross’ ministry to migrants. Fr. Marc in New Bedford, Mass., and Fr. Matt in Monterrey, México, are separated by thousands of miles and yet their stories of Holy Cross’ care for migrants and for those they leave behind share a common thread, placing a very human face on immigration—a vantage point too often missed in the cultural debates. Their stories are replicated every day in many apostolates of Holy Cross.

Additionally, I’m quite pleased to include a profile of Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C., who celebrated his Jubilee anniversary of 70 years of Ordination on May 24. I know you’ll find some of Fr. Ted’s anecdotes quite enlightening and entertaining. Fr. Ted is among 21 other Holy Cross religious we honor in May for their faithful commitment to their ministry.

As blessed we are by the lives and witness of our Jubilarians, the United States Province was further blessed in April with the ordinations of Rev. Brian Ching, C.S.C., Rev. Mark DeMott, C.S.C., and Rev. Jarrod Waugh, C.S.C. I invite you to join me and my brothers in Holy Cross in prayer for our members, young and old, as their life in ministry continues.

And as we embrace these men in prayer, you can be assured of the prayers of Holy Cross for you and yours. May God Bless you and your families and May God bless and guide the Congregation of Holy Cross.
Reflections of a Pilgrim People
by Rev. Daniel G. Groody, C.S.C.

With so many people forcibly displaced and moving around the world today, migra-
tion, in many respects, is a sign of our times, so much so that some scholars re-
fer to this point in history as “the age of migration.” Even though it is interwoven
into our biological and spiritual origins, migration is still one of the most complex
and controversial issues of our day.

Amidst the incendiary debates, the Church over the years has articulated a con-
sistent position on immigration. The Church has something to say about migra-
tion because it goes to the core of Her identity and what is most important to
Her.

Migration and Human Dignity
The starting point of the Church’s position about migration is rooted in God’s move-
tment to us in the Incarnation and His journey into the sinful territory of our broken
human existence. Jesus’ Life, Death and Resurrection make possible our return
to Him.

As it grapples with the complex chal-
enges posed by migration, the Church
focuses first and foremost on the central
human issues at stake. Though the eco-
omic costs related to migration need to be
addressed, the primary concern is the
human cost. When migrants are asked
what they find most difficult about their
situation, most of them — despite the gru-
elling physical journeys they take — talk
more about the deeper insults to their hu-
man worth. They may go without food
as they stroll assay on trains and buses.
They may gasp for air as they hide in cargo
containers of ships. They may thirst for
water as they cross the vast stretches of
desert. They may suffer in the mountains
amid cold and snow. But as difficult as
these hardships are, many migrants often
say that no physical suffering is worse
than being treated as if they were dogs,
as if they were not even human beings,
as if they were no one to anyone. The
reason why the Church cares so much
about the issue of migration is because
migrants are so frequently deprived of
their God-given human dignity.

Consequently, the Church invests much
of its energy trying to respond to the in-
justices migrants face. The Church also
gives a great deal of attention to the plight
of undocumented, economic migrants.
In response to the challenge of immigra-
tion, the Bishops from the United States
and Mexico published a joint document in
2003 called “Strangers No Longer: To-
gether on a Journey of Hope,” marking the
first time that a Church document was
jointly issued by two separate countries.
This initiative flowed out of Pope John
Paul II’s vision of a “globalized solidarity”
manifested through closer ties among
the Americas, especially among those left
out of the benefits of the current eco-

nic order.

The Church recognizes that human dig-
nity is integrally related to work, so as it
responds to the personal struggles of mi-
grants, it addresses structural issues that
impact their situation. The root causes of
economic migration stem principally from
underdevelopment and unemployment;
thus, part of the Church’s advocacy effort
focuses on obtaining more work visas.
But more labor-based visas are not enough.
Because these workers also have families
whose welfare depends on their employ-
ment status, the issue of migration takes
on a social component in addition to the
economic considerations and the Church’s
efforts encompass both facets of this
complicated issue.

This social consideration is what often
drives migrants to leave their home coun-
try. Family members need food, clothing,
safety and medicine and the problems of
underdevelopment and under- and un-
employment keep them from finding suf-
ficient employment to make ends meet.
Not uncommonly, a member of the fam-
ily travels north to find work. When they
are unable to obtain visas because they
are unskilled laborers, they often resort
to crossing the borders without official
documentation. In the context of my own
pastoral work in rural México, I was struck
by the number of villages inhabited only
by women and children. Most of the men
went north, looking for work, while most
of the women and children stayed behind.
In these villages, migration causes the
disintegration of families — the most ba-
sic cell of society. It is this social disintegra-
tion that greatly concerns the Church
because its costs to the human family are
everous.

Migration and the Incarnation
The Church cares about migration be-
cause the issue mirrors its own story.

Migration is in our spiritual genes. From
the call of Abraham to the Exodus, from
Exile to Return, from the birth of Jesus
to His Ascension, from Jesus’ call to the
disciples to “follow Him,” to His sending
them out into all nations, the theme of
movement and migration are interwoven
into the fabric of our journey with and
to God. In fact, Vatican II refers to the
Church’s own self-identity as that of “pi-
grims in a strange land” (Lumen Gentium,
§7). We come from God and we are called
to return to God and from beginning to
end, the Scriptures reveal to us a God who
migrates to His people, eliciting a response
in faith to a homeward journey.

Beyond political pragmatism and eco-
nomic efficiency, the inspirations for
the Church’s teaching come from its awareness
of the gratuity of God manifested in His
migration to us in the Incarnation. Another
way of saying this is the Church’s position
is guided by a different notion of the econ-
omy. The Church realizes that migration
does not have to do principally with a
monetary system, but fundamentally with
how the goods of the earth are arranged.
The Greek word ἀγάθος does not refer
principally to financial transactions, but
to how one arranges a household. Subse-
quently, the Church’s concern is directed
towards how the whole household of God
is arranged. At the very least, this means
that each human being within this holly
etary household should have the minimum
necessary for living a dignified life. This
also means that the economic systems of
the world should be ordered to the good
of all people and not just the benefit of
a privileged few. There is much to think
about in the current order of things and
its asymmetry with the designs of a loving
Creator. These disorders are rooted in un-
just structures, but as Vatican II observed,
they are also rooted in the disorders of
the human heart (Gaudium et Spi, §50).
Migration, rightly understood, is not a
problem in itself, but a symptom and a
consequence of much deeper imbalances.

Arguments about the economic, politi-
cal and social implications of migration
must first find a reference in the human
face of the migrant or else the core issues
at stake become easily distorted. If we
cannot see the human face of the migrant,
then nothing else will matter. To put it

Fr. Dan Groody with Syrian Refugees in a refugee camp in Jordan.

This year could bring the first com-
prehensive immigration reform since
1986. On May 21, the Senate Judiciary
Committee approved a bipartisan bill
sending the measure to the Senate floor
for consideration in June. The legisla-
tion creates a 13-year pathway to citizenship
for an estimated 11 million undocumented
immigrants, allows for “Dreamers” (chil-
dren brought to the U.S. illegally by their
parents) to apply for green cards in five
years, $4.5 billion for increased border
security, a new exit visa finger printing
system at airports, raises the cap on visas
for high skilled workers, establishes a visa
program for low skilled workers and
acks down on businesses that hire
undocumented workers. In the House,
there is no consensus on a bill.

A refugee camp in Malta visited by Fr. Dan, who reflects that after visiting with immigrants
From a theological perspective, different laws are at work in the problem of immigration and changing enforcement policies alone is not enough to achieve comprehensive immigration reform. Thomas Aquinas distinguished four kinds of laws: natural laws, civil laws, divine laws, and eternal laws. While the political debate deals mostly with civil laws, the Church is concerned with these other laws as well. While the Church has concerned itself for the national common good of respective countries, it is also concerned with the universal common good of all of God’s people. With regard to immigration, natural laws deal with parents needing to feed their families; civil laws pertain to ordinances utilized by society for the common good; Divine laws, known through Scripture, relate to the Gospel imperative to provide for the hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, imprisoned and estranged; eternal laws deal with how God keeps the universe in motion. When these laws interrelate in such a way that one form of law connects to the other, justice flourishes. However, when we have civil laws that exclude the poor without any regard for issues of natural law like underdevelopment, injustice abounds.

To clarify, the Church does not argue for open borders. The social teaching recognizes that there is a need and a duty to protect national borders, but it does not see this as an absolute right. The Church recognizes that the needs of distributive justice must be taken into account as a government formulates its border policies and enacts its laws.

Because we confuse illegality with criminality, we end up wasting the efforts of enforcement officials on those who are looking for work and prosecuting those whose only crime at its core has to do with providing for their families. It is striking that some who are scandalized by migrants breaking civil laws are not proportionally more scandalized by the living and working conditions in which migrants find themselves.

To be clear, there is a need for enforcement at the border, especially among the cartel violence that has skyrocketed in the last few years. But the tragedy of the border now is that many of our resources are directed toward chasing down those who are simply looking for work. The Church teaches that the ideal arrangement is for migrants to stay in their homeland, but when there are not sufficient conditions for a dignified life, the Church argues that migrants have a right to look for work, even if this search entails crossing borders without official documentation.

Migration and Conversion

When I was about eight years old, I came across a provocatively titled pamphlet from a church community, which read: “Did you know that you could miss heaven by eighteen inches?” It went on to say that the difference between the head and the heart of most people is only 18 inches. The point of the pamphlet was that, more than just a mental concept, God is a mystery who invites us to encounter Him in the depths of our souls, as well as our intellect. I would add that the borders and barriers we erect along the inner road of the heart are more obscure and difficult than any of those along the borders of nation states. The deeper challenges of the migration issue are rooted not simply in political issues, but spiritual ones as well. Since spirituality has to do with what we most value, migration – seen from a spiritual perspective – means moving into a new kind of life and a new way of being in the world.

In the end, the Church’s concern about migrants aims at promoting a Eucharistic community that fosters human solidarity. Since so much of the debate around immigration stems from fear, the Church challenges people not to let themselves be governed by fear, especially fear of those perceived as “the other.” The movement of Divine life into a human body is the ultimate migration into the space of “otherness” and one that undergirds any reflections on migration from a theological perspective.

Migration and Christian Solidarity

Thomas Aquinas speaks of exitus et reditus, the notion that we come from God and are called to return to God. We believe that in the face of the sinful human condition that road-blocked our return migration, God, in Jesus, saw the world that He migrated into the far and distant territory of our broken world so that we, in turn, could migrate back to our homeland. This means that migration is not about “us” citizens and “those” foreigners, but about all of “us” who are pilgrims in this world. As St. Paul described it: “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God” (Eph 2:19). Even so, not a few people remain walled in constrictive notions about migration and it remains one of the fundamental tasks of the Church’s mission to break down the walls that divide, alienate, exclude, discriminate and dehumanize.

Some seek to break down these barriers in creative ways along the border. One community decided to have a volleyball game with respective teams on both sides. Another held a picnic and shared food between the holes in the fence. And in various communities, some hold Eucharistic litanies where the congregation joins the altar together from both sides of the border wall. This Eucharist is not simply a political statement, but an eschatological and a social one, stating not only that these walls will come down when Christ comes again, but also that we are already united because of who we are as the Body of Christ.

The presence of a new wave of immigrants brings new challenges. As Latino immigrants to the United States bring the riches of their culture, they also bring a strong tradition of devotion, faithfulness and family centeredness that transforms and enriches the Church. In their ability to believe in God despite the unbelievable trials they endure, immigrants hold an important key not only to a nation’s strength, but also to the Church’s renewal.

Fr. Dan Ordoy, C.S.C., is an Associate Professor of Theology and the Director of the Center for Latino Spirituality and Culture at the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Fr. Dan was ordained on April 17, 1993.
“In your compassion, O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children scattered throughout the world.” We pray this line at Mass as part of the most common Eucharistic Prayer. Before the “Our Father” and just after the mention of our favorite saints, it’s something easy to overlook. When I hear this petition (and say it, now that I’m a priest), I usually overlook. When I hear this petition (and say it, now that I’m a priest), I usually

Fr. Matt Kuczora hears the confession of a young parishioner.

“...to the other side” of town, “across the street,” “across the side” of town, “...the other side of the border.” You never know. In Taman, it usually means to one of the big cities like Monterrey — when we have another Holy Cross parish — or to the United States. Regardless of where they go, their loved ones are far from home. In a place like San José Parish in Taman — so isolated and so disconnected — people who leave might as well be across the ocean. When we say Mass together before I have to go, everyone is praying for their loved ones scattered throughout the world.

It’s very hard for a young mother to think of Christian unity or God’s love for all people. But for families I work with in our Holy Cross parishes in México, this line has special meaning. Imagine a jungle: Mist rising above the palm fronds; a swirling, foaming brown river rushing through a mountain valley; exotic birds calling and gliding over thatch-roofed huts. This is where Holy Cross priests serve at San José parish in the warm, humid climes of central México. Many people here still speak the indigenous language, Nahua; the same language that the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe, spoke to Saint Juan Diego. There are no factories or shopping centers to provide employment. Most villages around the parish don’t even have paved roads connecting them to the rest of the world.

Members of Taman parish at one of the 50 plus chapels that comprise the parish.

Instead, people here grow crops and raise livestock as their ancestors have done for thousands of years. Their most prized crop is coffee.

The mountainous region of San Luis Potosí, once a vibrant area for coffee production and economic prosperity.

I’m no connoisseur of the stuff. I actually get a headache when I do have a cup. Still, the coffee from San José is excellent. The raw sugar it’s loaded with is probably part of the reason.

For many years, the people of our parish in Taman, San Luis Potosí, were able to work from dawn to dusk growing their coffee and selling it in the market. Not so long ago though, the price of coffee fell and now it’s hard to even give the stuff away. Among the steep slopes and hot sun, few other commercial crops grow very well. Without other sources of income, many families have been forced to leave their ancestral homes in search of work to support their families.

It’s a big event when one of the padres comes to the village. Because there are so many communities that the parish serves over 500, some only have Mass once a month. Many people walk hours to the parish in town if they can. Still, that’s a luxury for most. I love going up the mountains to these remote settlements. The scenery is breathtaking and the environment humbling.

When I get there, it’s not uncommon to see only babies and elderly people. Sometimes you see a few young mothers too. As they timidly peer out from their simple homes, they welcome me with a cup of coffee brewed over a wood fire. The black smoke stains my cup and gets on my hands as I burn my lips on the first sip. They ask a lot about where I’m from and I try to learn new words in Nahua.

After a while though, we inevitably talk about their sons, daughters, husbands, brothers, fathers and nieces who have gone al otro lado to work.

Al otro lado literally means, "to the other side." In México, that could be "the other side of town," "across the street," "across the country" or "the other side of the border." You never know. In Taman, it usually means to one of the big cities like Monterrey — when we have another Holy Cross parish — or to the United States. Regardless of where they go, their loved ones are far from home. In a place like San José Parish in Taman — so isolated and so disconnected — people who leave might as well be across the ocean. When we say Mass together before I have to go, everyone is praying for their loved ones scattered throughout the world.

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Instead, people here grow crops and raise livestock as their ancestors have done for thousands of years. Their most prized crop is coffee.
try anything.

In Holy Cross, we do our best to accompany the families left behind, the people who are far from home and those who have come back broken and shamed. It’s heartbreaking to listen to the elderly woman who is praying for her son’s return, the son she hasn’t heard from in 30 years. She’s asking God, and asking you, to help her because she doesn’t have a Facebook account, a private investigator or even a telephone to find him.

The same is true in our urban parish in Monterrey, where many people are working to make money for those they’ve had to leave behind. They might get home once a year if they’re lucky. They’re saving every peso and centavo for their families, even if it means they go a few days without eating or don’t buy new shoes when their toes burst out of the old ones. Like clockwork though, that paycheck makes its way to Taman and a thousand other rural towns.

For those men and women who sacrifice so much for their children and families, we offer all kinds of material support. At our food pantry, migrant workers can get some much-needed groceries. The doctor at the parish clinic will fix up the nasty gash they got on the construction site or the food processing plant. Nevertheless, Holy Cross priests and religious offer them more than the basic necessities like food and medical assistance. In Confession, we give them God’s gift of forgiveness. At Mass, we give them strength for their journey. With our friendship and presence, we remind them how much God loves them and gives them hope that through the struggles of the crosses they bear, new life will flourish. In turn, their example of love and limitless generosity—even when they have very little give—inspires and strengthens us just as much as anything we can offer.

In Holy Cross, we work on both sides of el otro lado. For those who are discouraged and far from home, we bind them in prayer with their families through God’s love. For those who are lonely and waiting in their villages, we unite them with their loved ones through our common faith. Together we pray: Reune en torno a ti, Padre misericordioso, a todos tus hijos dispersos por el mundo. “O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children scattered throughout the world.”

Fr. Matt Kuczora, C.S.C., is Director of the México Vocations Office and the Postulant Formation Program in the Holy Cross Region of México. Fr. Matt was ordained on April 14, 2012.
Advocating for Those in the Shadows

by Rev. Marc F. Fallon, C.S.C.

On a recent winter weekend afternoon, several K’iche’ Mayan women residing in New Bedford, Mass., found some important doorways to cultural capital opened to them. Born in the epicenter of systemic atrocities, massacres and suffering of the Guatemalan Civil War of the early 1980s, an era in which ethnic Mayans and Roman Catholics suffered disproportionately, their immigrant refugee community has increasingly populated the fish-packing jobs of the New Bedford front. They also live their Christian vocations as parents of U.S. citizen children, comprising “mixed-status” families. Yet the social and political climate prescribes a life in the shadows for these devoted parents, who seek the best for their children while management underpay them with impunity. When two Brown University students in nearby Providence, R.I., approached the New Bedford Whaling Museum asking to curate local textiles by K’iche’ Mayan women, which would in turn be supported by an annual budget from an existing Brown collection, it was a moment of rare social dignity and cultural recognition for the women.

Integral Ministry to Migrants
The Congregation of Holy Cross ministers as Educators in the Faith, incorporating a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable populations in society, including migrants. Between the 1837 Fundamental Act of Union and the 1875 Vatican approval of our Constitutions, Holy Cross committed to rebuilding the schools and parishes of post-revolutionary Le Mans and also ministering to migrants. The Congregation sent missionaries to the French colony of Algiers. Missionaries who journeyed to East Bengal laid the foundation for the thriving Sacred Heart and Saint Joseph Provinces of today’s Bangladesh. When Rev. Edward Sorin, C.S.C., and six brothers journeyed to the Diocese of Vincennes, Ind., and later opened a school alongside the St. Joseph River to the north, this was certainly before the young U.S. republic. In the first years of the University of Notre Dame du Lac, Indiana, Illinois and adjacent states were sending troops to staff the armies of President James K. Polk’s calculated acquisition of the poorly-defended Mexican territory of Coahuila y Texas, as the U.S. breached this border under the justification of Manifest Destiny. When the first Holy Cross women and men arrived in Quebec in 1847, they served the majority Franco- phone immigrant population who lived under minority Anglophone political power and economic influence by colleagues six years earlier. In March 2007, the federal ICE sent militarized officers to detain 361 members of the local community for working without federal status. After such a period of time, 300 parents, parishioners and active community members remained without determination of their status by the federal government.

Both examples of immigrant encounters with the wider U.S. society took place only a week apart, yet there is a chasm in the social messages conveyed to those who are new to this nation, language and culture. The Congregation of Holy Cross, acting on our own rich history of advocacy for Catholic immigrants, has been called to interpret the signs of our times as the United States interacts with the world economy, increasingly the economies of other American states. There is plenty of criticism of federal legislation, or lack thereof, to go around. Meanwhile, we in Holy Cross teach and minister to those who carry the burdens of unjust or outdated laws and categories that offend the human spirit.

The Bible sets the foundation for Catholic Social Teaching on immigration. The Holy Family fled to Egypt to avoid the terror of Herod (Mt. 2:14-15). Jesus instructs us to welcome the stranger (Mt. 25:35). The Gospels also tell us that Jesus was not welcomed by His own people (John 1:11). The Disciples welcome the stranger – Christ – on the road to Emmaus and become witnesses to the Truth (Luke 24:13-15).

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A demonstration of traditional K’iche’ Mayan textile production.

The Congregation of Holy Cross has a tradition of Catholic Social Teaching over the past decade. Our pastoral and educational experiences as members of an apostolic religious community increase our attentiveness to the growing complexities of the global economy, multicultural experiences and the lag time of legislators to address pressing social issues. Nor can we omit military operations overseas that support, or appear to defend, U.S. interests in multinational corporations. As we shall see with the example of New Bedford Central American expatriates, U.S. military and economic actions have directly affected the social disruption of communities and sent many young adults north as refugees. Directly following the Second Vatican Council, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops established the Catholic Campaign for Human Development in 1969. Simply put, we as Church realized that our network of parish based programs, schools, hospitals and clinics were answering all of the social needs of the era. The CCHD would provide grants and support to community groups addressing the root causes of poverty. The Campaign is premised upon empowering community leaders living in poverty, ongoing education for justice and solidarity with all sectors of the Church and ministry rooted in the universal baptism of believers who are called to act concretely on their faith.

The CCHD has been instrumental in supporting the Central American refugees who found themselves in harsh working conditions in post-industrial New Bedford. When the CIA sponsored the 1954 overthrow of democratically elected Guatemala President Jacobo Arbenz, this began a civil war that, while ostensibly ended in 1960, has disrupted the society ever since. During the documented genocidal campaign of Gen. José Efraín Rios Montt of the early 1980s, the military targeted indigenous K’iche’ Mayans and Catholics in the Diocese of Santa Cruz del Quiche. Bishop Juan Gerardi, later murdered by the military in 1989, closed all parishes and pastoral works of the Diocese during this era of massacres. An entire generation fled as refugees. The K’iche’ Mayans and other economic refugees of Central America reached the post-industrial regions of the northeast U.S. in the 1990s. Providence, R.I., proved
a center for the expatriate community. At some point in this decade, the Mayans learned of fish-packing work in nearby New Bedford. When the fish houses were de-unionized during the 1980s, the owners quickly realized the opportunities for under-paying undocumented immigrants. A shadow economy rapidly developed, with scant attention to the payment of overtime, collusion with temporary labor agencies to skim wages, verbal and sexual abuse in the workplace and the perception of no recourse for immigrant workers. The local Diocese of Fall River realized the presence of the single, Central American refugees working in fish-packing and other industries while sending remittances home as the new century began. While New Bedford had two parishes serving the Latin American population, a gap in the midst of the rapidly developing community gained national attention as the New Bedford shadow economy. CCHD support began, along with the Burgess Urban Fund of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, the Lenny Zakim Foundation and other funders, the group needed to focus its organizing on particular needs. With wage theft and workplace abuse endemic, OMK filed initial claims with the Attorney General’s office. OMK worked with the police to clarify the rights of workers who, while undocumented by the federal government, contributed greatly to the local economy. OMK also collaborated with the University of Massachusetts—Dartmouth Labor Education Office and the Massachusetts Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health to increase workplace safety for undocumented workers, as well as other immigrant advocacy groups in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

In March 2007, the New Bedford community gained national attention as the Department of Homeland Security raided the Michael Bianco textile factory and detained 96 New Bedford parishioners, separating 112 children from their parents or caregivers. The community responded with alarm and with action, opening parish doors as a resource for those most affected, in particular these children who were suddenly and unjustly left alone. The CCHD ministry supported Organization Maya K’iche’ and the diocese with many pastoral needs or the lack of a specific pastoral experience. For all of the challenges of advocating for undocumented immigrant workers, the history of the Congregation of Holy Cross provides many examples of concerted ministry on behalf of the vulnerable and defenseless. Our ministry with Latin Americans often began in a vacuum, the absence of attentive pastoral ministry in a diocese with many pastoral needs or the lack of a specific pastoral experience. Finally, many of the bitter tears in the aftermath of the 2007 federal intervention were shed just blocks away from Saint Anthony School, where the Soeurs de Sainte-Croix of Québec and Manchester, N.H., conducted bilingual French and English primary education for the better part of 90 years. We have the history and example of our forebears and are confident of their intercessory prayers.

In 2003, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued the pastoral letter “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope” where they articulated five principles which govern how the Church responds to public policy proposals on immigration:

- People have a right to find opportunities in their homeland.
- People have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.
- Sovereign nations have a right to control their borders.
- Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
- The human right and human dignity of undocumented migrants should be respected.

Read the entire document at bit.ly/V2QmeL.
A 6-year-old’s Dream
by Stephanie Gattman

Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., did not have the classic dreams of most six-year-olds.

He didn’t want to be a farmer or a policeman. “I just wanted to be a priest, not necessarily knowing what I would do as a priest, except that I knew I wanted to be a priest,” he said as he prepares for the 70th anniversary of his Ordination.

“I don’t know why God does what God does,” he said. “I knew I wanted to be a priest. Once I came here, I didn’t want to do anything but be a Holy Cross priest.”

While Fr. Hesburgh is the oldest and longest-serving priest in the United States Province today, he doesn’t hold the record for having served the longest. Rev. Walter McNerney, C.S.C., was a priest for 72 years before he passed away in 2008 at the age of 102 (and a half). Fr. Hesburgh will celebrate his 66th birthday on May 25—the day after this year’s Jubilee celebration.

His introduction to Holy Cross came while he was attending Most Holy Rosary School in Syracuse, N.Y., as an eighth-grader. There he met Rev. Tom Duffy, C.S.C., a Holy Cross priest who was at the parish talking about missions. Fr. Duffy encouraged the young Hesburgh to become a Holy Cross priest.

“I said, ‘I don’t even know what that is,’” Fr. Hesburgh said. “Fr. Duffy tried to convince Anne Marie Murphy Hesburgh to allow her son to attend the high school seminary at Notre Dame, but she would have none of it. “She said, ‘He’s going to high school right here ... he’s going to be like any other high school kid. He’s going to be in clubs. He’s going to go on dates. He’s going to dance. He’s going to have a normal high school experience.’” Fr. Hesburgh said of his mother’s response.

Fr. Duffy was afraid that the young man might lose his vocation. Mrs. Hesburgh wouldn’t buy that, either. “If he’s growing up in a Christian family, going to Catholic school, going to Mass and Communion every day ... if he loses his vocation, I’ll tell you something, Fr. Duffy, he doesn’t have one,” Fr. Hesburgh said she responded.

Four years later, Fr. Duffy contacted him again and Fr. Hesburgh made his way to Notre Dame with his family to start at Holy Cross Seminary. After his parents and sister drove away, “I felt very much alone,” he said. “That first month was so tough; I never even opened up the travel trunk. I didn’t even know if I was going to stay.”

A month later, Fr. Hesburgh unpacked his trunk. He felt as if he fit in.

His formation years were far from ordinary. Fr. Hesburgh spent his novitiate year in the new Rolling Prairie (Ind.) Novitiate. Back then, the young men had to keep silent except for two hours a day. But the silence was helpful. “It did me well,” he said. “I didn’t enjoy it, but I did it and it gave me a lot of time to think. You are constantly reminded of God and vocation.”

Today, young men at the Novitiate don’t have to keep silent.

Fr. Hesburgh said the hard work at the Novitiate strengthened his vocation. “Once I finished it, I never had any doubts about being a priest of Holy Cross.”

He spent his sophomore year at Notre Dame, but then was sent to study philosophy at the Gregorian University in Rome. After three years there, World War II broke out and he and his fellow Americans were sent home. He spent four years studying theology at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. While the doctorate should have taken four years to complete, he finished in two years.

Fr. Hesburgh wanted to serve as a Navy Chaplain, but his Holy Cross Superiors might lose his vocation. Mrs. Hesburgh would not buy that, either. “If he’s growing up in a Christian family, going to Catholic school, going to Mass and Communion every day ... if he loses his vocation, I’ll tell you something, Fr. Duffy, he doesn’t have one,” Fr. Hesburgh said she responded.

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Fr. Ted and Fr. Ned Joyce, C.S.C., start their retirement in style on a pair of matching scooters. Theirs was a team effort at Notre Dame, those years.”

“Fr. Hesburgh, said. “We never had a fight in all the 35 years I’ve known him.”

He speaks fondly of his brothers in Holy Cross, but especially of Rev. Ned Joyce, C.S.C., with whom he worked for more than 60 years and, as Fr. Hesburgh likes to point out, “We never had a fight in all those years.”

There was a team effort at Notre Dame, explained. Fr. Joyce, chief financial officer at ND for 35 years, was good at things Fr. Hesburgh didn’t necessarily care about — finances, sports, building and construction and engineering, he said. Fr. Hesburgh said it’s a personal testament to their friendship that when the two retired at age 70 in 1987, they traveled across the United States and Canada in a motorhome. “It was a great experience and a wonderful friendship,” Fr. Hesburgh said.

The two even said Mass in the motorhome every morning. Fr. Joyce died on May 2, 2004.

Fr. Hesburgh’s experience and visibility propelled him to the national stage through his well-known efforts as chair of the Civil Rights Commission, his membership on the National Science Foundation and as chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation, among many others. In fact, Fr. Hesburgh has had 16 presidential appointments and a number of papal appointments throughout the years.

Being a priest and serving as chairman of Ordination and engineering, he said. Fr. Hesburgh said it’s a personal testament to their friendship that when the two retired at age 70 in 1987, they traveled across the United States and Canada in a motorhome. “It was a great experience and a wonderful friendship,” Fr. Hesburgh said.

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All three Provinces of the Congregation of Holy Cross in the United States participated in a special Day of Fasting on March 15. Religious of the Holy Cross Provinces of Priests and Brothers, the Midwest Province of Brothers and the Missions Province also donated their own money to the Abhayadhama Human Development Center. The Center, which is run by the Brothers of Holy Cross in Bangalore, India, is a home for street children and other underprivileged children from the region.

Rev. Robert Gilmour, C.S.C., a U.S. Province priest serving as District Steward and Secretary of the District of West Africa, was invested with the rank of Honorary Supreme Past Knight by the Supreme Council of the Noble Order of the Knights of Malta. He has been the organization’s Supreme Chaplain for more than 30 years.

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

For the 13th year in a row, the University of Notre Dame earned a spot on Peace Corps’ annual list of the top volunteer-producing mid sized colleges and universities across the country. With 23 alumni currently serving overseas as Peace Corps volunteers, the University ranks No. 18 and remains a source of inspiration to diversity and enhancing Stonehill’s Catholic character. Fr. Denning served as Vice President for Mission at the College from 2001 to 2007 and also served as Director of Campus Ministry from 2000 to 2017. He is a doctoral candidate in higher education administration at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

INDIANA

Sacred Heart Parish, Notre Dame

The parish sponsored a Seder Meal in February to recall its common Biblical roots with Jerusalem. The Seder celebrated the deliverance of Israel from political and spiritual bondage in Egypt. The two-hour celebration included traditional Jewish Passover music and food.

STONEHILL COLLEGE

Rev. John Denning, C.S.C., was named the 10th President of Stonehill College on May 17. He will take over for Rev. Mark Cregan, C.S.C., who announced in September that he would step down on June 30. Fr. Denning is currently Vice President for Student Affairs, a position he has held since 2007. He will assume the presidency on July 1 with an inauguration to take place later this year. Fr. Denning cited his passion to build upon the College’s strong academic reputation, deepening its commitment to diversity and enhancing Stonehill’s Catholic character. Fr. Denning served as Vice President for Mission at the College from 2001 to 2007 and also served as Director of Campus Ministry from 2000 to 2003. He is a doctoral candidate in higher education administration at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

TEXAS

St. Ignatius Martyr Catholic Church, Austin

Five eighth-grade students from St. Ignatius Martyr Catholic School were honored Jan. 30 at the Greater Austin Area Catholic Elementary Schools Celebration of Service & Leadership Mass.

VERMONT

Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Parish, Bennington

The North Bennington church, which will celebrate its 500th anniversary of about 500 families, recently gave approximately 700 people a shopping cart full of food each month.

MASSACHUSETTS

Holy Cross Parish, South Easton

The parish’s Respect Life Committee constructed a Respect Life Garden on the church grounds, which includes a 4-foot marble statue of the Holy Family. The inscription on the base of the statue, from Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, will read, “When human life under any circumstance is not held as sacred in a society, all human life in that society is threatened.” Parishioners donated more than $6,000 toward the garden and statue.

ARIZONA

St. John Vianney Parish, Goodyear

St. John Vianney School is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. It was founded by Rev. Joseph V. Corpora, C.S.C., who is now Director of University School Partnership programs at the Alliance for Catholic Education and Coordinator of the Latino Student Ministry at the University of Notre Dame. Fr. Corpora was honored and was the keynote speaker at a benefit dinner in February.

FLORIDA

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, Viera

During the church community participated in “Long-Sleeve RELIEF” to benefit farm workers. The parish collected long-sleeve shirts, jeans, work gloves, hats and socks of all sizes to benefit men and women migrant workers.

Holy Cross Mission Center

The Mission Center is holding a fundraising dinner on June 9 to raise money for Holy Cross Lake View Secondary School, which is on the banks of Lake Victoria in Jinja, Uganda. The school needs $3.5 million to complete construction of four new residence halls. The special event dinner is being called An Evening with a Lake View. It will be held at Moreau Seminary, which overlooks St. Joseph Lake on the campus of Notre Dame. District Superior of East Africa Rev. Patrick Neary, C.S.C., will host the dinner and also preside at a special Mass.

HOLY CROSS FAMILY MINISTRIES

More than 200 people attended a Healing Mass on Jan. 7, the Feast of St. André, at the St. Joseph Chapel at the Father Peyton Center. The event included a Mass, anointing with St. Joseph Oil and a St. André relic was available for blessings and veneration.

AVE MARIA PRESS

CatholicMom.com and Ave Maria Press partnered in a CatholicMom.com Project, a Lenten effort to provide spiritual support to expectant mothers. The goal of the project was to send 50 copies of “A Catholic Mother’s Companion to Pregnancy” — a week-by-week spiritual companion for pregnant women — to 20 pregnancy centers across the United States.

ANDRE HOUSE, PHOENIX

Twelve volunteers — 10 students and two staff — from King’s College worked at André House for a week each in January. Stonehill College sent a group of six students and a staff member in February and a second group in March. In addition, on Jan. 21, André House was the host site for the AmeriCorps National Day of Service. People associated with AmeriCorps were invited to join our regular volunteers to serve more than 600 meals in the soup line.

DISTRICT OF CHILE

On March 1, the District of Chile — the longest-running mission still overseen by the United States Province — celebrated its 70th Anniversary. U.S. Provincial Superior Rev. Thomas J. O’Hara, C.S.C., noted this momentous occasion: “In honor of the men who preceded us in this mission, and gratitude for those that today carry that mission forward, let us celebrate together the common mission we all share in Holy Cross and give thanks for the invitation we first received there and for the fidelity to that commitment for 70 years!”

DISTRICT OF EAST AFRICA

The District Retreat took place in January in Kakamega, Kenya, and was led by Fr. Eamon Mulcahy, a Spartan priest from Manchester, England, who teaches at Tangaza College in Nairobi, Kenya. The theme was “Renewing our Brotherhood.” The Transition Years Workshop for younger religious in perpetual vows took place at the Holy Cross Novitiate at Lake Saaka in February.

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**Plain Speaking**

by Rev. Herbert C. Yost, C.S.C.

“I’m curious: Are there any immigrants who have become saints?”

—M.C. from Indiana

I chuckled when I saw this question because my immediate response was: “Be careful, the immigrant whom you diss may be a saint in the making!”

Seriously, you will be surprised at the number of American saints who came here from other countries. We have Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini who was born in Italy and arrived in America on March 31, 1889. Frances founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose primary ministry was to the Italian immigrants who at the time were flooding into the United States. The primary ministry of her community was centered around orphanages and hospitals. Frances became a U.S. citizen in 1909 and was canonized in 1946. Another was Bishop John Neumann who immigrated from Bohemia. I couldn’t find exactly when he became a U.S. citizen, but he was ordained in New York in June 1836, so that gives us an approximate time period for U.S. citizenship. John was the fourth Bishop of Philadelphia and is considered to be the father of the Catholic School system in the United States. Bishop Neumann was canonized in 1977.

Sr. Rose Philippine Duchesne, canonized in 1988, came to America from France in 1818 and along with her religious community ministered primarily to Catholics in the Midwestern United States, with a special focus on Native Americans.

Sr. Marianne Cope was born in Germany in 1828 and a year later her family immigrated to New York. Sr. Marianne’s primary work was with the lepers on the Hawaiian Islands of Maui and O’ahu. She was canonized in 2012. Mother Theodore Guérin was born in Brittany, France, and came to the United States in 1839. She was responding to a call from the Bishop of Vincennes, Ind., to establish a school for girls, which became St. Mary of the Woods College. She also established parochial schools throughout Indiana and Illinois. Mother Theodore was canonized in 2006. The North American Martyrs (Isaac Jogues, Rene Goupil and John de Lalande) came from France to minister to the Huron and Iroquois Indians. They were martyred in 1646 and canonized in 1930.

Damien of Molokai, the great priest to the lepers of that island, was born in Belgium, came to the United States in 1864 and was canonized in 1988.

Elizabeth Ann Seaton, Katherine Drexel and Kateri Tekakwitha are also American saints, but they are native-born. Are you surprised at the number of immigrant saints?

Now add to this list the immigrants to America who have achieved the rank of Blessed, which is the last step before sainthood. Among those people are Eduardo Farre and Lucas Tristany, parish priests in Arizona martyred during the Spanish Civil War. Carlos Manuel Rodriguez was a lay minister and catechist in Puerto Rico. Diego Luis de San Vitores was a Spanish missionary martyred in Guam. Francis Xavier Seelos was born in Germany and exercised his priestly ministry in Pennsylvania. Junipero Serra was the founder of the Spanish Missions in California. There are even more immigrants to America who are found on the list of those called Venerable and Servant of God, like Holy Cross’ very own Irish-born Fr. Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. There are way too many to list for this column. In addition, God alone knows how many immigrants to this country made tremendous contributions to the American Church and society, yet are not officially recognized by the Church.

For example, walk through the Holy Cross community cemeteries at St. Mary’s and Notre Dame. There you will find many names of those who came to America from other lands and made great contributions to the people of the United States. Likewise, I think of other great American Catholics like Dorothy Day, Cesar Chavez and Thomas Merton.

Catholicism and sainthood aside, the contributions of immigrants to our country can’t be overestimated. Every aspect of American life has been touched by those who have come to our shores from other countries: scientists, actors and actresses, civil servants, designers and architects, sports figures, business people, musicians and on and on. Saint or not, every immigrant can be a great potential blessing to those they encounter.

Questions for Fr. Herb? Send to: PlainSpeaking c/o Congregation of Holy Cross United States Province P.O. Box 765 Notre Dame, IN 46556-0765 development@holycrossusa.org

If you want to read Fr. Herb’s weekly Gospel reading reflections, please visit us online at reflections.holycrossusa.org

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Throughout the history of the Congregation of Holy Cross, we have been blessed by benefactors who have made a pious bequest or legacy (legatum pium) in support of our mission and our ministries.

Many of these bequests were: established our mission presence around the world; built and sustained our community houses; empowered our care for the poor; provided health care for our elder Holy Cross religious; and supported the formation and education of new Religious.

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