



Pillars

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRIESTS OF HOLY CROSS, INDIANA PROVINCE



A sacred moment during the 2008 summer mission in Ahuacatlan, Mexico. A young girl goes to confession.

Holy Cross and Mexico

by Rev. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C.

The Congregation of Holy Cross is firmly established in Monterrey, Mexico, today primarily because of the Holy Cross Priests and Brothers who have worked in Texas. Since 1874 the Congregation has been serving Latino communities in Central Texas, now the Diocese of Austin.

In January 1972 one of those Holy Cross priests, Fr. Frederick Schmidt, C.S.C., at age 65, headed for San Luis Potosí, Mexico, on a “sabbatical”. Still on a “sabbatical” thirty years later, 95 year old “Padre Federico” died on January 12, 2003 in Ahuacatlan, SLP, after serving the poorest of the poor in various mountain villages. He is buried there and to this day is revered by the local Mexican community so

much so that they have initiated the process for his canonization as a Saint.

In early 1987, at the suggestion of Fr. Jack Keefe, C.S.C., and other members of Holy Cross in Austin, Fr. Peter Logsdon, C.S.C., the Provincial of the former Southern Province at that time, presented a proposal to the Superior General to accept a parish in the Archdiocese of Monterrey, Mexico. Fr. Jack Keefe, C.S.C., became the first Holy Cross pastor of Santo Tomás Moro (St. Thomas More) parish in Guadalupe, Nuevo León.

There were two major reasons for accepting this parish. First, the Archdiocese needed priests and



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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.

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In Thanksgiving

Rev. David T. Tyson, C.S.C., Provincial Superior



Greetings!

First and foremost, I want to extend a most heartfelt thank you to all of you who support us both in prayer and contributions. Our mission, made real through the ministries in which we

engage, would be seriously restricted, if not in some cases, impossible, without you. Your generosity was evidenced in 2008, particularly at year-end, as we realized an increase in donations over the year before. Given the economic hardships of last year, and this year, I am both grateful and humbled by your outpouring of support!

We have entered the season of Lent – a time for prayer, fasting and almsgiving. While it may seem as though there is always a phone call to return; an e-mail to respond to; a letter to answer; a meeting to attend; a project to finish and many more to start, it is imperative that now more than ever we find God’s presence in all we do. It is through His loving presence that we find peace, guidance and love to carry us through the challenges of life.

It is imperative that now more than ever we find God’s presence in all we do.

This issue of Pillars is dedicated to the vital work of Holy Cross in Mexico, particularly the growth in

our vocations and formation program. In 2006, the Indiana Province and the Southern Province were reunited as one, with the Indiana Province “inheriting the legacy” of service to the Church in Texas and Mexico established by the Southern Province.

Fr. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C., Director of Formation in Mexico, has written three wonderful articles that illustrate the vision of Fr. Moreau alive in the work of Holy Cross in Mexico.

Also, Fr. Herb Yost, C.S.C. explores the question posed by a reader, “Why do we wear ashes all day on Ash Wednesday?” If Jesus told us to be secretive in our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, why do we publically pronounce, through ashes, our faith?

Fr. Richard Potthast, C.S.C. shares a wonderful reflection on the Golden Jubilee of Holy Cross in East Africa. A series of celebrations took place throughout the later part of 2008 and into 2009, culminating with events January 3 and 4, 2009 in Uganda. As you read Fr. Potthast’s reflection on the history and ministry of Holy Cross in East Africa, you will see why there was great reason to celebrate.

Thank you again for all you do for us and those we serve. With faith in Divine Providence and a commitment to Moreau’s vision of a community focused on educating the world in faith, I pray that Holy Cross in Mexico will, with joy and thanksgiving, also celebrate its own Golden Jubilee!

May God provide you with peace and renewal during this Lenten Season. ✠

Mexico

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religious to serve the needs of the poor, especially in the new and rapidly developing communities in the metropolitan area of Monterrey. Second, Holy Cross would have a place for its members to learn about the culture, language and faith of the Mexican people in order to serve them well as Catholic communities in the U.S.

Santo Tomás Moro parish grew rapidly. With a pastoral vision for local communities and lots of hard work, Fr. Jack and his associates established a large number of neighborhood chapels. Parishioners could easily walk to Sunday Mass. Priests traveled from one community to another celebrating the Eucharist.



The interior of the main church of La Luz Parish, built with the support of generous donations and the leadership of the pastor, Fr. Pete Logsdon, C.S.C.

Holy Cross Sisters joined the project in 1994. Their ministry has served the children, youth, and women, as well as extensive outreach to the poor through a program called, “Caritas.”

With the tremendous growth of Santo Tomás Moro, in 1996 a new parish was born out of one of those chapels in the poorer area of the parish – Nuestra Madre Santísima de La Luz (Our Most Holy Mother of the Light). Rather than continue at Santo Tomás Moro, Holy Cross decided to accept this new parish based on our mission to serve the poor. Fr. Pete Logsdon, C.S.C., became the pastor and continues to serve as pastor up to today.

As for the second reason for being in Mexico – to learn about the culture, language, and faith of the Mexican people in order to serve them well as Catholics in the United States – many Holy Cross priests, brothers and sisters have served in our Mexican parishes. Some have returned to the United States in order to serve the Latino community in Texas or Florida, California or Arizona, Nevada or Indiana, and more.

Another exciting thing has happened. With the encouragement of Fr. John Korcsmar, C.S.C., the most recent Provincial of the former Southern Province, young people in our Holy Cross parishes, high schools, colleges and universities in the United States have come to our parish for an “immersion experience” in Hispanic ministry. It is estimated that over 2,500 students have spent a week or a summer over the past several years, learning from their experience of serving the needs of others in a world far different than the one from which they came.

This thumbnail sketch of Holy Cross in Mexico briefly describes our Holy Cross history, the how and the why we arrived in the north eastern part of Mexico twenty-one years ago. What it doesn’t include is a major development that took place in 1993. Under the leadership of Fr. Leonard Collins, C.S.C., Provincial of the former Southern Province at that time, and with the arrival of an experienced missionary, Fr. Daniel Panchot, C.S.C., a Holy Cross vocation and formation program for young men from Mexico was begun. In this edition of **Pillars** we would like to share that story with you. ✠



The Holy Cross Community of Monterrey

Plane Speaking

Your questions answered by Rev. Herbert C. Yost, C.S.C.



Priest and furniture-maker, Fr. Herb Yost, C.S.C.

Why Wear Ashes All Day?

“The Gospel we hear on Ash Wednesday appears to be in contradiction with our practice of wearing ashes [note: The Gospel speaks of praying, fasting, and alms-giving not for show, but in secret]. Those statements seem to say that we

should not make a ‘big deal’ out of doing what is necessary for purity of intentions, yet we receive ashes that morning and we are off to school/work as if to say: ‘Look at me, I’m Catholic, and I went to Church this morning.’ Please help me to understand this issue. “ J from NJ

The short answer to your question, J, is “I don’t know! The next longer answer is: “We’ve always done it that way so don’t rock the boat!” But I know you don’t like that one, so here’s another answer: “Hmmm... gotta think about that one!”

When I ran my original answer by Jim Kramer, our Director of Development, he thought I wasn’t answering your question. To quote Jim: “I interpreted the question as seeking a reply to a seemingly contradictory message from Jesus and the Church. On the one hand, Jesus says be secretive in your devotions and actions, not flashy or gong-banging Christians. But, the Church has the tradition of ashes on the forehead which tells the world you are Christian. There’s no secret in wearing ashes on one’s forehead. How can we reconcile these practices/teachings which seem contrary to one another? That’s how I read the question, anyway.”

A second opinion really helps sometimes! I immediately thought of other seemingly contradictory examples. Jesus says of the Pharisees that they like to wear special garb and take the front seats at synagogues. Yet the Church favors priests and nuns wearing distinctive garb,

see *Plane Speaking*, pg.15

Religious Formation in Mexico

by Rev. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C.

In 1993 Fr. Leonard Collins, C.S.C., then Provincial of the former Southern Province, and Fr. Dan Panchot, C.S.C., decided that the time was right to invite young men from Mexico to join Holy Cross. Two young men joined the program in August of that year. One of them is a Holy Cross priest today, Fr. Marín Hernandez, C.S.C.

The formation program started in two rented houses that were located in Santo Tomás Moro Parish. Two houses for two seminarians! This humble beginning has had a major impact on the Congregation of Holy Cross in Mexico.

The truth is that they were small houses and space was needed for a chapel, library, community room, dining room, kitchen and individual bedrooms for the seminarians as well as the Holy Cross priests accompanying them in their vocational discernment. Plus there was hope. The number of seminarians was expected to grow. In fact more young men came to Holy Cross from all over Mexico wanting to respond to God’s call.

In 1995, two years later, Holy Cross purchased a house for the formation of the Holy Cross seminarians. Dedicated to Mary, this house was larger, had bedrooms for at least eight candidates



Fr. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C., left standing, with the 2008 summer mission team

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Religious Formation in Mexico

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in addition to the common spaces for prayer, meals, meetings and recreation. The formation program was focused on a good education, the basics of religious and community life in Holy Cross, and preparation for the Novitiate.

Today there are four postulants living in community with a Holy Cross priest who was in the candidate program twelve years ago, Fr. Paulino Antonio, C.S.C., and a Holy Cross deacon from Moreau Seminary, Notre Dame, Aaron Michka, C.S.C. (He will be ordained a priest on April 18, 2009.) Three others are knocking on the door and God willing they will enter this program in August 2009.

These men who come as postulants (candidates) eventually make a formal petition to go to the Holy Cross Novitiate in Lima, Peru. The Novitiate experience is an intense year of formation in the religious life, the vows, the Holy Cross Constitutions, the spirituality of service, prayer and meditation. For almost all of the postulants, living as a Novice in Peru for a year is their first experience outside of Mexico.

In 1999 the Southern Province bought another house in the parish and established a second house of formation, this one for the men returning from the Novitiate. Up until 1999 the seminarians who returned from Peru in temporary vows lived with the pastor in the rectory.

Today there are five seminarians in vows that live in this house with two Holy Cross Priests, Frs. Daniel Panchot, C.S.C., and Tom Zurcher, C.S.C. The post-novitiate formation program is directed toward continued growth in community life, the vows, the spiritual life, human development, ministry, and especially the education in philosophy and theology that is so important for priesthood in Holy Cross.

Fr. Collins and Fr. Panchot started the Holy Cross formation program in Mexico fifteen years ago together with the priests and brothers of the Southern Province. On December 12, 2006, the Southern Province and the Indiana Province

reunited, and the Indiana Province inherited this legacy of initial formation in Mexico. It is a legacy of hope.

The Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross state, "We must be men with hope to bring." (Con. 8.118) With three men from Mexico in final vows, two of them ordained as Holy Cross priests, the glimmer of hope is flickering due to the life time commitment of Holy Cross religious in Mexico. With nine young men in formation in Mexico, there are rays of hope for ongoing Holy Cross service to God's people in this country. Others in Mexico are discerning the possibility of a vocation to priesthood and religious life in Holy Cross and Holy Cross will be here to welcome them.



Alfredo Olvera, prostrate, during his Final Vows. Fr. David T. Tyson, C.S.C., Provincial Superior, kneels to the right of Fr. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C.

Still in the stage of humble beginnings, this legacy of initial formation in Mexico has strengthened and added to the original two reasons for the Congregation to come to Mexico – to serve the needs of the church, especially the needs of the poor and to learn from this ministry in Mexico in order to better serve the Catholic Mexican community in the U.S. Through this program of seminary formation the Congregation of Holy Cross is taking root in the soil of the Mexican church where it hopes to grow, thrive, and bear abundant fruit in its life and ministry with the Mexican people. ✠

An Interview with Mexican Seminarian Mr. Alfredo Olvera Ledezma, C.S.C.

Fr. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C. translated the interview questions and answers to English. See page 8 and 9 for the Q&A in Spanish, Alfredo's native language.

Editor: At what age did you first sense a call to religious life?

Alfredo: When I was ten years old.

Editor: How old were you when you joined Holy Cross?

Alfredo: I was fifteen.

Editor: Why Holy Cross?

Alfredo: The service and the selflessness of the Congregation caught my attention. From my childhood I knew one of the members of Holy Cross, Fr. Federico Schmidt, C.S.C. And I believe that by belonging to the community I came to identify a lot with the Congregation, especially with the diversity of apostolates and the never ending search for the service of others.

Editor: Will you describe the highlights of your formation with Holy Cross?

Alfredo: One of the greatest experiences of my time in formation in the Congregation has been, without a doubt, the experience of the novitiate. The novitiate experience was a "marker" experience, a before and an after in my time of formation. In general I believe that in all of my formation I have experienced growth as a person and above all in my faith.

Within the Congregation I began studying as a high school student. After that, I studied Philosophy. Right now I am studying in my third year of Theology.

The ministry experiences that I have had have been diverse. I have worked as a catechist in the parish, in the Holy Cross ministry of Family Rosary, in parish Social Ministry with special needs people, in pastoral ministry to prisoners in the Penitentiary, and this year I am visiting the sick in one of the hospitals here in Monterrey.



Seminarian Alfredo Olvera, C.S.C. takes time to pray during the Holy Week Mission, 2008

Around the Province

The Generalate in Rome

✠ January 9, 2009 marked the 100th anniversary of the birth of Fr. Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. Fr. Peyton devoted his priestly life to encouraging families to come together daily to pray the Rosary. He saw so many benefits to this simple practice. Holy Cross Family Ministries president Fr. John Phalen, C.S.C. inaugurated the year by initiating a novena of prayers. All are invited to observe this Centenary Year of 2009 with a Novena of Rosaries. As a special devotion, it is suggested to add a simple prayer for Father Peyton's beatification at the end of your Rosary.

Portland, Oregon

✠ The Downtown Chapel (St. Vincent DePaul Parish) ministers to the homeless, addicted and mentally ill in Portland, Oregon. They sponsor "Personal Poverty Retreats," a program offering one full day working with the marginalized, while learning more about the issues of poverty and the Gospel call to serve those in need. Recent participants in this immersion experience were students from the University of Portland, seminarians from Mount Angel Seminary and staff from Catholic Charities in Portland.

✠ Fr. Ron Raab, C.S.C. recently preached a five day retreat to graduate seminarians at St. John's Seminary for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He also preached a parish mission at St. Augustine Parish and St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Pleasanton, CA. Available at www.downtownchapel.org is Fr. Raab's 2009 Lenten At Home Retreat.

✠ Fr. Dick Rutherford, C.S.C. serving at the University of Portland, presented his paper entitled "Baptismal Anointing in the Eastern Mediterranean: Old Questions – New Evidence from Cyprus" in January.

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Around the Province

His presentation was the keynote address at the annual meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy.

✚ Fr. Jim Lies, C.S.C., with Amanda Nowak, a 2007 graduate of the University of Portland School of Nursing, have had an article published in *Illness and Crisis Loss*, a journal sponsored by the Center for Death Education and Bioethics. The article was entitled “Health Within Illness: An Examination of College Students Encounter with Quadriplegia.”

✚ The first annual “Spirit of Holy Cross Award” was given to Dr. Paul Myers, Director of the University of Portland Health Center, at Mass on January 20, the Feast of Blessed Basil Moreau.

Austin, Texas

✚ The Vocation directors from the U.S. Provinces recently met in Austin to share ideas and talk about their work and plans for attracting more vocations to Holy Cross. The Indiana Province Vocation Office (which is also responsible for Eastern Province Vocations) explained how they are using the Internet (see below) and how they have designated regional vocation mentors to support a nationwide Vocations plan. Representatives from other Provinces talked about their immersion programs and programs of community living.

✚ Austin Interfaith, whose members include Fr. Joe Tomei, C.S.C. and Fr. John Korcsmar, C.S.C., is a coalition of 30 religious congregations, public schools, and unions who work together to address public issues that affect the well being of families and neighborhoods in the community. Recently, Austin Interfaith held an Economic Summit in collaboration with Catholic Charities of Central

Interview

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I believe that my spiritual growth can be understood above all in my relationship of faith with God. In order to continue going forward in life, I believe that our trust and faith must be based in Jesus Christ, and that we discover this faith through the different circumstances in which we live. In my experience it is through my pledge to give of myself completely. I believe that in doing so I will always experience the security of my life in faith. The way in which I have grown spiritually is, before anything, through prayer and also by way of people who have given direction to my life through their experience and presence. I believe that maturity goes hand in hand with this spiritual experience and it is discovered through human growth.

Editor: Now that you have professed perpetual vows, what is next for you?

Alfredo: I continue in the formation process and the next step is the diaconate.

Editor: Where do you see your ministry in five years or ten years from now?

Alfredo: In the next five years with the grace of God I believe that I will be a Holy Cross priest and I would like to be working in full time pastoral ministry in a parish. I believe that this is my call – the service of people and, above all, in one of the neediest parishes in Mexico. I would like to see the growth of the Congregation of Holy Cross in Mexico as well, both in our membership and in the services that we are able to offer in the future.

Editor: What opportunities do you see for the life and work of Holy Cross in Mexico?

Alfredo: I believe that Holy Cross has much to give to people, primarily for the qualities of service in the Congregation. I think that through the different ministries the Congregation is able to respond above all to those who are most poor, the people who cry out for our help, to families and to the youth. I believe that right now it is necessary to take on some specific works in order to establish an identity as the Congregation of Holy Cross in Mexico. ✚

Una Entrevista con Alfredo Olvera Ledezma, C.S.C., un Seminarista de Santa Cruz en Mexico

Redactor: ¿En que edad (cuantos años tuviste) cuando experimentaste tus primeros sentimientos sobre una llamada a la vida religiosa (o el sacerdocio)?

Alfredo: Cuando tenía unos diez años

Redactor: Cuando entraste o afiliaste a Santa Cruz, ¿cuantos años tuviste?

Alfredo: Tuve 15 años

Redactor: ¿Por qué Santa Cruz?

Alfredo: Me llamó la atención la Congregación, su servicio y su entrega. Ya que desde niño conocí a uno de los miembros de la Congregación el P. Federico Shmit CSC y ya como un miembro de la comunidad creo que me he llegado a identificar mucho con la Congregación, sobre todo por la diversidad de apostolados y la búsqueda siempre del servicio a los demás.

Redactor: ¿Describirías las experiencias más importantes (las altas luces) en su formación con Santa Cruz? En resumen, ¿que estudiaste y que estudias, que ministerios, y que hiciste y haces para entender y crecer en tu vida espiritual; como describirías tu crecimiento espiritual y su madurez durante este proceso de formación?

Alfredo: Una de mis más grandes experiencias en el tiempo que estado en formación en la Congregación ha sido sin duda la experiencia del noviciado, creo que marca un antes y un después en mi etapa de formación. En general creo que en toda mi formación he experimentado un crecimiento en mi persona y sobre todo en mi fe.

Empecé estudiando la preparatoria ya dentro de la Congregación, después la Filosofía y actualmente estoy estudiando en el tercer año de Teología.

Los ministerios que he tenido, han sido diversos. He trabajado



Mr. Alfredo Olvera, C.S.C. with Fr. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C. at the August 2008 Final Profession of three Holy Cross seminarians at Moreau Seminary.

Around the Province

Texas. Also participating were the Bishop of Austin, Most Rev. Gregory M. Aymond, and many business leaders. The Economic Summit focused on the economy, how it is affecting families and what can be done to help people who are suffering as a result.

✚ Capital IDEA, an organization started by Austin Interfaith, and whose board members include Frs. Tomei and Korcsmar, held its Annual Celebration of Achievement in February. Capital IDEA will mark its 10th anniversary this fall. It will mean ten years of helping lift working families out of poverty by sponsoring educational services that lead to life-long financial independence.

Notre Dame, Indiana

✚ As mentioned previously, the Vocation Office has launched a new way of reaching out to young men who may be considering a vocation in Holy Cross. Visit the vocation website at www.vocation.nd.edu and link to the CSC Video Channel on YouTube, which features several brief interviews with a number of Holy Cross Religious. There is also a Holy Cross Blog that will highlight activities of Holy Cross religious and seminarians.

✚ In December, the Presidential Citizens Medal, which recognizes U.S. citizens who have performed exemplary deeds of service for the nation, was presented to Fr. Timothy R. Scully, C.S.C., Director of the Institute for Educational Initiatives at Notre Dame. His citation reads: "Father Timothy Scully has committed his life to strengthening communities through faith-based education that prepares individuals for a lifetime of achievement, service, and compassion. Through his leadership at the University of Notre Dame,

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Around the Province

he has developed innovative ways to support under-sourced schools. The United States honors Father Timothy Scully for demonstrating that every human being has boundless potential.” Congratulations, Fr. Scully!

East Africa

✠ In January, Fr. James Burasa, C.S.C. was re-elected as District Superior. This is Fr. Burasa’s third consecutive three-year term, a testament to his valued leadership in the District.

✠ Joining in the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the District of East Africa were prior District Superiors and other religious instrumental in the growth of the District, including Fr. Frank Zagorc, C.S.C., the last living founding missionary to East Africa.

Travelling from the United States for the Jubilee were **former Superiors**,

Fr. Jack Keefe, C.S.C.

Fr. Bill Blum, C.S.C.

Fr. George Lucas, C.S.C.

Current Provincial Superiors,

Fr. David Tyson, C.S.C., Indiana Province

Br. Tom Dziekan, C.S.C., Eastern Province of Brothers

Former Staff,

Br. James Rio, C.S.C., teacher

Br. James Branigan, C.S.C., Eastern Province of Brothers

✠ When the situation in Uganda under Idi Amin was at its worse, too many youth remained idle partly due to the lack of athletic equipment. Holy Cross religious in Uganda began football (soccer) clubs, importing soccer balls and shoes illegally for their teams. The Kyarusozzi Kats, founded by Fr. Richard Potthast, C.S.C. in 1994, is comprised of players from around the parish. The Kats have won many trophies in the district, and are a local fan favorite.

Interview

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en catequesis en la parroquia, en el ministerio de Rosario en Familia, en la Pastoral Social de la Parroquia, en la Pastoral Penitenciaria y actualmente esto visitando a los enfermos en uno de los hospitales de aquí en Monterrey.

Creo que mi crecimiento espiritual lo puedo entender ante todo en mi relación de fe con Dios. Creo que la confianza debe estar fundamentada en Cristo para seguir adelante y eso se va obteniendo a través de las diferentes circunstancias de la vida y en mi experiencia es a través de mi compromiso de entrega y creo que siempre puedo experimentar la seguridad de mi vida en la fe. La manera en que he crecido espiritualmente es ante todo a través de la oración y por medio también de las personas que orientan mi vida a través de su experiencia y su presencia. Creo que la madures va de la mano con esta experiencia espiritual, y se va descubriendo a través del crecimiento humano.

Redactor: Ya has profesado tus votos perpetuos, y ahora ¿que va a pasar para ti o que es el suceso próximo para ti?

Alfredo: Sigo en el proceso de formación y el siguiente paso es el diaconado.

Redactor: Pensando o soñando en tu futuro, ¿que imaginas sobre tu ministerio en cinco años o diez años de hoy? ¿Qué es tu llamado, por tu punto de vista, como un sacerdote de Santa Cruz?

Alfredo: Creo que ya dentro de 5 años con la gracia de Dios seré un sacerdote dentro de la Congregación y me gustaría estar trabajando de lleno en la pastoral de una Parroquia. Creo que ese es precisamente mi llamado, el servicio a las personas y sobre todo en una parroquia de las más necesitadas en México. También me gustaría hacer que la Congregación crezca aquí en México en sus miembros y servicios que pueda dar en el futuro.

Redactor: ¿Que oportunidades prevés para la vida y el trabajo (o ministerio) de Santa Cruz en México?

Alfredo: Creo que la Congregación tiene mucho que dar a las personas, sobre todo por las características de servicio de la Congregación. Pienso que a través de los diferentes ministerios la Congregación puede llegar sobre todo a los más pobres, a las personas más alejadas, a las familias y a los jóvenes. Creo que por lo pronto es necesario realizar algunas obras para establecer una identidad como la Congregación de Santa Cruz. ✠

Golden Jubilee Celebration of Holy Cross in East Africa

by Fr. Richard Potthast, C.S.C.



From left to right, Fr. Frank Zagorc, C.S.C., Fr. Dick Stout, C.S.C., and Fr. Richard Potthast, C.S.C., at the Golden Jubilee Mass

My name is Fr. Richard Potthast, C.S.C. I arrived in Uganda on November 3rd, 1967. Like all of the Holy Cross priests who

came before me, I went to Butiiti Parish to learn the local language. Except for one year serving the Christians in Busongora and three months at Virika and Bukwali, I was assigned to Butiiti Parish. Most of my years at Butiiti, I was the pastor. In September of 1994, we opened a Holy Cross Parish called Kyarusozzi (St. Jude Tadeus), a former sub-parish of Butiiti and I am still there today. To describe all that has taken place is nothing short of a miracle of grace. This in itself is enough to be thankful for the celebration of the Golden Jubilee.

During the seventies, the time of Idi Amin, many community members left the district, both brothers and priests. Some of the priest members even voted to withdraw from Uganda. The idea was rejected by the provincial administration. With a few members left, we resembled Fr. Basil Moreau in his hope, and we decided on what seemed like two foolish moves. One was to expand to Nairobi, Kenya and the other was to accept local or indigenous vocations. We had no formation program, no houses of formation, no parishes that we could call our own, and the priests and brothers were divided.

At the time of celebration of the Golden Jubilee, we were thankful for all that has taken place since those dark days of the seventies. We have an initial formation house called Andre House, with

thirty-six brother and priest candidates who study at the philosophy center in Jinja, Uganda (PCJ). We have the Saka Novitiate in Fort Portal, Uganda, with three novices (a fourth from Ghana). We have McCauley House of formation for theological students that number twenty professed members who study at Tangaza. Both the PCJ and Tangaza are institutions that are partly owned by the District of East Africa.

Our Holy Cross Community commitments include St. Brendan's Parish, Kitete, Tanzania; Dandora Parish, Nairobi, Kenya; and in Uganda Bugembe Parish, Jinja; Kyarusozzi Parish, Fort Portal; Holy Cross Lakeview Secondary School; Jinja. Every parish has other schools, vocational training, primary and secondary schools attached to its apostolate. Dandora has a large dispensary for the sick. The Family Rosary Ministry is thriving in our District.



With Bishop Daniel Jenky, C.S.C., D.D., center, from the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, the Holy Cross Community of East Africa as it looks today

Recently two members of our community have begun to teach at Uganda Martyrs University. Our administration house is located in Kampala, Uganda, and recently Fr. James Burasa, C.S.C. was re-elected as superior of the District. In total, we

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Golden Jubilee

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have forty-one indigenous Holy Cross religious and eight Americans.

At the time of the celebration of the Golden Jubilee, there was under construction the first phase of a community-based retreat/rest center on the Nile River called Njeru. Most of our apostolates and service to our Christians are options for the poor. This is what we were told to do as missionaries.

Without the support of many benefactors, we would be in no position to do the many things that we do. I, as an elder in this community, have been blessed a hundredfold by the many generous people who have helped us in this work. God's work and Mission is not finished. As we pass the torch on to others, my prayer is that all our members be religious who have faith, who are men of prayer, and they trust in Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

I do not say these words lightly. I have witnessed healings of all kinds – spiritual, psychological, and physical – and deliverances from evil, all in the Name of Jesus. There is nothing impossible that Jesus can do. Our present situation as we celebrated the Golden Jubilee was a witness to what God can do.

The final celebration of the Golden Jubilee itself was two days of activities, highlighted by Masses of Thanksgiving at Virika where it all began. January 3rd, 2009, Bishop Robert Muhiirwa of the Fort Portal Diocese led a thanksgiving Mass that Fr. Frank Zagorc, C.S.C, one of the pioneer missionaries, gave the homily both in English and Rutooro. The youth choir from Kyarusozzi participated in the liturgy. The Police Band from Kampala led a march through the streets of Fort Portal to the football pitch at Buhinga ground, where my Kyarusozzi Kats played a team called the Volcanoes. It ended in a scoreless draw.

On Sunday, January 4th, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Paul Tschang In-Nam, led the final thanksgiving Mass and the Superior General of the Holy Cross Congregation, Fr. Hugh Cleary, C.S.C., gave the homily. Choirs from Dandora and Virika Parishes participated in the Mass. The festive Mass was followed by entertainment and speeches that highlighted the celebration. Besides all of the Holy Cross members there were a number of bishops and diocesan clergy who attended the celebrations.



Entertainment by "Ngaba zaTooro", a cultural group from Fort Portal performing at the final day of the Golden Jubilee Celebration, January 4th, 2009.

The speeches highlighted the achievements and the blessings that have come from the presence of Holy Cross during the last fifty years. The future generations of Holy Cross men and women will have a history of dedicated people to follow. Our motto for the celebration read: *The Competence to See, and the Courage to Act.* Let us hope that the future generations will be able to see and always have the courage to act. Whatever bit of help that can be offered to help this process will be a participation in God's mission for this part of Africa. May Jesus bless all who participate in this mission! ✠

Mexican Seminarians on Misión

by Rev. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C.

Holy Week and July mean going on mission for the Holy Cross seminarians in Mexico. They entered Holy Cross with a passion for ministry, wanting to serve in the areas of Mexico where there is the greatest need. These missions provide that opportunity.

The week long missions also provide an opportunity for these men in formation to learn and develop the skills for future pastoral ministry as priests and religious in Holy Cross. Collaboration, effective communication, organization, transportation, and more, become a part of their mission experience of evangelization.



Holy Cross seminarians and lay missionaries, together with Bro. Joseph Kofi Tsiquaye, C.S.C. and Fr. Dan Panchot, C.S.C., preparing to go to a chapel community in Ahuacatlan, San Luis Potosí, Mexico

For many years Holy Cross priests, brothers, sisters and seminarians have been going on mission to rural parishes in Tamzunchale and Xilitla, San Luis Potosí. These “parishes” aren’t quite what is experienced as a parish in the United States. These parishes have a church in the center of town as well as up to 50 chapels in the mountains surrounding the town. In these “chapel communities” 300 to 500 Catholics may gather each week to pray.

These chapel communities don’t have a resident priest. Once every six weeks or so, the pastor may travel up to 4 to 6 hours from the central parish church to one of the distant chapel communities for a weekday Mass. It is to these communities that Holy Cross sends a mission team – for example, a Holy Cross priest and three or four seminarians – to provide the sacraments as well as daily talks about the Gospel for the children, adolescents and adults.

These Holy Cross mission teams are frequently accompanied by as many as 25 lay missionaries who are formed and trained previously by the Holy Cross seminarians. Many times the lay people who participate in the missions, especially the summer missions, are themselves discerning a possible religious vocation. The experience in mission is quite often a means of firing up their apostolic zeal and desire to give their lives to Christ in this type of commitment.



Fr. Tom Zurcher, C.S.C. blesses the rosaries distributed freely at a recent mission visit.

During the Holy Week mission people in these chapel communities can go to confession and experience the forgiveness of their sins, the ill and the elderly can receive the sacrament of anointing, and the community can celebrate the Mass of the Last Supper as well as the

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Mexican Seminarians on Misión

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Resurrection of Jesus commemorated in the Easter Vigil. Seminarians organize and participate in local devotions like the living Stations of the Cross and the Good Friday services.

During the summer mission the seminarians are creative in the development of mission themes. Last summer for example, they developed a mission based on the five joyful mysteries of the rosary. Each day of the mission was dedicated to the application of one of these mysteries to the daily experience of the people. This mission was so well received that the pastor has asked that the same joyful mystery mission be offered to another chapel community even though it is Holy Week. These experiences provide an opportunity for the Holy Cross seminarians to integrate the mission of Holy Cross Family Ministries (Family Rosary) in their apostolic planning.

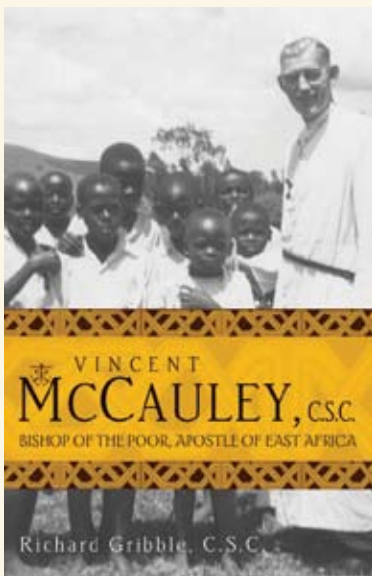
The Constitutions of the Congregation describe Holy Cross priests and religious as educators in the faith with a preferential concern for the poor.

The Holy Week and summer mission experiences for the Mexican men in formation provide the opportunity to move this description off the page and into their hearts and souls. At the same time, they serve God's people in Mexico who want to live more faithfully their faith in Jesus Christ. ✠



Devotional home altars for family prayer are common among the Mexican faithful. This faithful lady stands before her altar waiting to receive the Sacrament of the Sick during the 2008 summer mission

New Book Details the Life of Servant of God, Bishop Vincent McCauley, C.S.C.



In this definitive biography of “servant of God” Vincent McCauley, C.S.C., Richard Gribble, C.S.C., shows how his life was one of extremes. McCauley grew up in the quiet, peaceful, American town of Council Bluffs, Iowa, in the early twentieth century. Although he nearly lost his beloved calling to be a missionary to cancer, he went on as a bishop to survive the rampant violence of 1970s Uganda. This compelling biography demonstrates how, through these changing extremes, McCauley maintained an immovable faith and uncompromising vision, hewn within the long-standing missionary spirit of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

Available at www.avemariapress.com

Theme Chosen for Forthcoming Campaign



The Priests of Holy Cross, Indiana Province, after a careful and prayerful assessment based partly on the exceptional feedback from many friends, family, and benefactors, have chosen to begin plans for a landmark campaign to advance Holy Cross formation and vocation programs, international missions, particularly in East Africa and in Mexico, and the care of all religious, with a special focus on elder and retired priests and brothers.

Still in the early stages of development, Holy Cross is identifying volunteer leadership to serve this national effort, while laying the foundation for regional opportunities to share its story.

The theme of the campaign, taken directly from the Constitutions of Holy Cross, is ***Following in the Footsteps of a Great Band of Men***. The theme honors the great priests and brothers who laid the foundation of Holy Cross around the globe, while acknowledging a brilliant future with the quality and number of vocations and the many opportunities for ministry. Additional information will be provided in future issues of ***Pillars***.

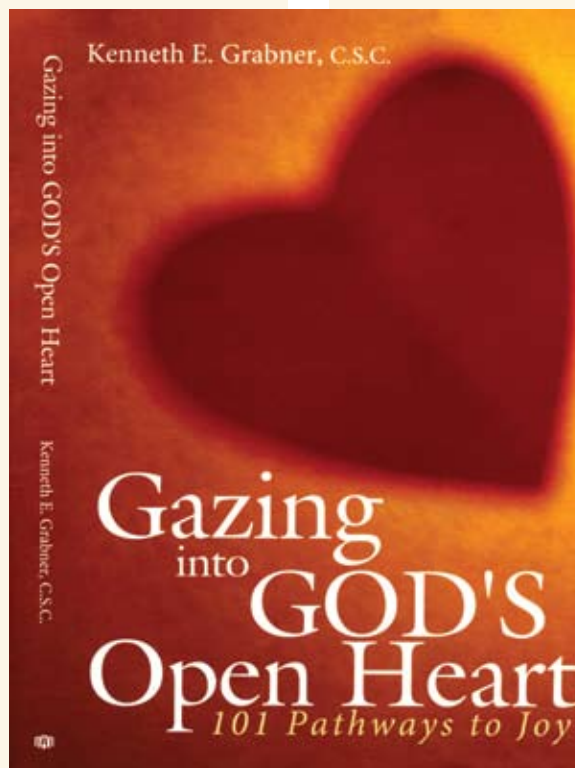
For inquiries, email at: info@footstepscampaign.com, or call 1-877-631-1539.

New Book by Fr. Ken Grabner, C.S.C.

Gazing into God's Open Heart is for all who hunger for intimacy with God. God in his love has opened his heart to us through the message and actions of his Son, Jesus. This gift of intimacy is meant to enrich us and to be the cause of our joy. Fr. Grabner invites us to gaze into God's open heart, and prayerfully reflect on the joy that comes from seeing the riches of love cradled within it.

Since many of us are busy people, each of the book's 101 ways to joy is designed to be read in just a few short minutes. This allows time for reflection that enables readers to make the ideas a part of their

lives. The book is meant to light a warm, gentle fire in the hearts of all who read and reflect on it.



Kenneth Grabner, a member of the Congregation of Holy Cross, is the author of several books, including *Focus Your Day*, and is a long time contributor to *Living Faith*, a booklet of daily devotions published four times yearly. He has a doctoral degree in theology, and has taught at the University of Notre Dame. He has given many presentations on spiritual topics to those desiring to deepen their faith. His ministry presently includes chaplaincy services at Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame.

Available at Authorhouse.com

Plane Speaking continued from page 4

and concelebrating priests must be seated in the sanctuary. You might also note that monsignors, bishops, cardinals, and the Pope all have distinctive garb meant to denote rank. Jesus nowhere speaks of Purgatory, yet that's been a long-time doctrine, and recently indulgences have been making a comeback (indulgences are time off purgatorial punishment due to sin if certain steps are taken, and this even though time ceases to exist once one dies). Jesus says "Sell all you have and give to the poor," yet the church has vast wealth in the Vatican museums.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* seems to agree with what Jesus said: "Jesus' call to conversion and penance...does not aim first at outward works, 'sackcloth and ashes,' fasting and mortification, but at the *conversion of the heart...*" (#1430).

So why does Jesus say one thing and the Church does another? Throughout history this has happened, and even today, when I hear or read of some ecclesiastical pronouncements, I wonder: "Are they reading the same Gospel I am?"

I honestly am not sure how to reconcile the two. That ash thing is one of those things we take for granted and never think about, and you're right on in the quoting of the Gospel. A lot depends on a person's intentions, and those we can never completely understand. Many people, after receiving ashes will wipe them off, if they are even very visible to begin with. It could be embarrassment, a desire not to appear different, or maybe even company and school policy (kinda like a gang tattoo, I guess!). If one is prideful about his ashes and is using them to show off his "spirituality" to others, it's best to wipe them off. Others keep the ashes on, not because they're trying to impress folks, but because they feel the ashes are a witness to others of the importance of repentance.

The only answer I can think of that helps reconcile things is the whole notion of sacraments and sacramentals. For those not sure of the difference, the seven Sacraments are instituted by Jesus and are direct encounters with the Divine. Sacramentals are designated as such by the Church, and are meant to inspire or assist communal and personal devotion and prayer. The one shared characteristic of both sacraments and sacramentals is that they make use of earthly things. Wood, water, oil, wheat, grapes, touch,

body language, metal, stone, fire, salt, beeswax, cloth, incense, precious metals, and yes, ashes. We Christians are an earthy lot, for sure!!

Jesus was noted for using the earthly to teach and to heal. His teachings are full of references to mother earth and nature. He used spittle and clay for healing. He used bread and wine for feeding our hunger. His breath was used for forgiveness and empowerment. The Catholic Church definitely follows Jesus in this regard...we have always made use of earthy, gritty signs and symbols. So we have lots of water at baptism, bread that is really bread for the Eucharist, anointing with lots of oil for healing, and hands raised in praise and petition during the Our Father. And yes, we have ashes as a sign of our desire to repent and as a reminder of our coming death. So we may not be doing exactly what Jesus *said*, but we are doing what he *did*!

I would conclude by saying that Jesus did not question the practices you mentioned, J. What he questioned was the motive of the individual. It was an ancient and honored tradition to have an outward sign (e.g. sackcloth and ashes) that one was fasting or repenting. The person served as a sign to others that they too needed to think about their need for fasting or repentance. What Jesus was criticizing was the motive of the person for wearing the ashes, the special garments, praying publically, giving alms with a flourish. Was it for outward show, to gain praise, to appear holier than thou, to show you were part of the in-group? If so, the spiritual benefit was non-existent. Far better, Jesus said, to do things quietly and simply, without fanfare. Such humility gains the Father's approbation and results in inner conversion rather than outward adulation. ✠

Question for Fr. Herb? Send it to:

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Thank You.