

Secular Servite News

Fall 2008



Servites in Curitiba, Brazil Deacon Jack Rhine SOSM and Karen Rhine SOSM

When we mentioned we would be visiting friends in the city of Curitiba during our trip to Brazil, Fr. Vidal suggested that we visit the Servite House of Formation there. Our friend Dulce in Curitiba called the Servites to make arrangements for a visit.

On September 8, a holiday commemorating the founding of Curitiba. Dulce, her husband Ivan and the two of us drove to a quiet neighborhood where the House of Formation is located. Because it was a holiday, we were fortunate that most of the residents were present. They gave us a warm welcome and immediately invited us to share lunch.



There are three Servite Houses of Formation in Brazil; one in the north, one further south and the house in Curitiba, about a ten-hour drive to the southwest of Rio de Janeiro. There are four Servite friars living in the house, including Frei Marcos Huk, the prior; Frei Clodovis Boff (a well known theologian --- brother of Leonardo Boff one of the founders of the liberation theology movement and of Dr. Lina Boff OSM also a theologian and university professor); Frei Antonio Chemin; and Frei Valdir Borges. Eleven seminarians from all over Brazil study and live there. Six of the seminarians are in the pre-novitiate and five are postulants.

The seminarians take philosophy courses at the house and the rest of their education at the Pontifical Catholic University of the State of Paraná. The friars are on the faculty of the university and Frei Marcos is a graduate student there. The friars also assist at the local Servite parish, Mary Queen of the Church, a ten-minute walk from the house. The postulants do manual labor at the house, caring for the grounds including their vegetable garden, a beautiful rose garden and the ducks and chickens that they raise. Those in the pre-novitiate work in the parish, primarily in ministry to the sick and elderly.



The seminarians prepared a delicious lunch including fresh salad vegetables from their garden, a chicken dish (they raise chickens for eggs and buy chickens for eating) and rice. For dessert, we had crème of cupuaçu a fruit found only in the Amazon. Considered a delicacy, the fruit was mixed with sour cream and condensed milk.

After lunch, we toured the house and grounds. The Servites have two hectares of land, which is just less than five acres. You know you are standing on holy ground there. Amid the rose, flower and vegetable gardens, outdoor Stations of the Cross, “stations” of the Seven Sorrows, cross, and statues, you will find the soccer field, ever present in Brazil!

Inside we saw the chapel, the sacristy, the library and the capitular or meeting room. Our friend Dulce translated for us although two seminarians knew a bit of English. We learned there are Servite Secular Order communities wherever there are Servite parishes. For the most part the secular communities are alive and healthy although some have problems similar to some of our communities. Of the many permanent deacons in Brazil, around 50 are in the Curitiba area and two are in formation at Mary, Mother of the Church Parish.

It was a wonderful visit. Our Brazilian brothers said they experienced a sense of the worldwide family and so did we. Our friends, Dulce and Ivan, were impressed with the Servite hospitality that they witnessed. It was exciting to see that there are so many vocations to the Order. But, most of all, we were happy to experience a house full of love and warmth.

Plainfield, IL
Our Lady of Marian Lake Secular Community
Judy Brug, SOSM

Our community, Our Lady of Marian Lake, had a very successful Tea Party on April 26. There were about 75 people in attendance, both men and women. We served tea, pastries, and fruit. We also had a silent auction and sold our “Mary’s Flowers” throws. Sr. Gesuina, OSM, was our guest speaker and Theresa Recchia, SOSM, was the MC.

We all worked very hard to come together and host an enjoyable afternoon of fellowship and to give information to others about our community. We were able to raise over \$2000 and felt very thankful to our fellow Servites and for our guests.



Hartford, CT
Comunidad Nuestra Señora de la Providencia
Carmen E. Rodríguez, OSSM

On Saturday, August 23, 2008, the members of Our Lady of Providence Secular Order Community gathered at the beautiful shore of Connecticut for a long-awaited Retreat Day. Carmen M. Rodríguez, OSSM, Prioress, planned this spiritual day for our community by contacting Las Hermanas Misioneras of Hartford to plan and conduct the retreat for us. The setting was the perfect for listening to the Word of God and praying together.

The planned agenda for the day included reciting Morning Prayer (Lauds) together, followed by the talk by Sister Edin: “The Need for Prayer.” We were then given time to ourselves for meditation and each one of us selected a place to which we could escape: some selected the beautifully and tastefully arranged rooms that overlooked the Atlantic Ocean through the fabulous windows; others took a walk on the beach just to feel the warmth of the sunny breeze; yet others sat on a swing.

The second session moved us into the Gospels: “How the Bible Teaches Us to Pray.” We heard about the various types of prayers: Thanksgiving, Transformation, Praise. Each of these types were presented by using Jesus as the model for all prayer. Sister demonstrated in the Word of God how Jesus withdrew to the mountain for silent prayer; how Jesus asked the Father not to be forgotten. We too can move through life in prayer as Jesu did. This is a commitment made for life. We, as Servites, need to live in prayer, but not only in prayer but to bring prayer to action.

After our morning sessions, we shared our lunch in silence. It is not often that we have an opportunity to eat in silence. After lunch, we had time to walk on the beach: some simply sat and watched; others walked on the beach; others looked for rocks and shells; others just stood in thanksgiving for the sunny blue skies and the miracle of being there. Then, we regrouped and the Sisters had plans for us! We sang, danced, jumped: all in the name of Jesus. That was an experience never to be forgotten. It was amazing that both men and women danced like children.



We then knelt before Jesus in the tabernacle in prayer. Sister Edin, who is rather talented, sang and played the guitar to provide for us an even deeper prayer experience. It moved us to search our hearts and to ask for God’s forgiveness. We felt how the Holy Spirit moved among us.

To conclude the day, we watched a film on the life of Pope John XXIII and learned how he cherished prayer in his own life. He is truly a model of prayer for us.

Servant of Mary Serves Mothers

Elizabeth Ministry was founded in 1991 in Wisconsin. Modeled on the story of Mary's visit with her cousin Elizabeth, the ministry encourages women to support and assist others in their childbearing years, and has grown to more than 500 international chapters. The ministers call themselves friends, not experts, and reach out to one another through home visits.

Secular Servite, Darlyne Carson, of St. Juliana Community in Ladysmith, WI, learned how much women need each other about 20 years ago. Her daughter was a college student, unmarried, and pregnant. Darlyne remembers, "At the time it was quite a stigma. People were judgmental and not as kind." Her daughter kept her baby, stayed in school and graduated—with a lot of support from her mother. Darlyne made many trips to help her—3 hours one way.

This experience eventually led Darlyne to begin a chapter of the Elizabeth Ministry at her parish in Hayward, WI, about 10 years ago. Since then, it's become a successful lay outreach program there, which starts by helping single pregnant mothers, "to let them know there's hope and help. So often people tell women, 'Don't have an abortion,' but they don't tell them that they will help them."

Young mothers are just the beginning. Darlyne and about 42 parishioners support mothers of all ages in celebrating births, sharing grief and offering comfort after a miscarriage or the death of a child. They give compassionate assistance following an adoption, offer understanding with fertility and infertility issues, or during an infant or child crisis, and assist grandparents, and support families with their prayers.



Information about Elizabeth Ministry circulates by word-of-mouth, and through notices and brochures in doctor's offices, county offices, and the local hospital, which includes them in discharge packets for new mothers. The Elizabeth Ministry director receives the referrals or direct calls from the mothers, and connects them with a ministry member. New mothers, feeling lonely or insecure, receive assurance from the one-on-one attention, and it sometimes grows into a beautiful relationship.

To become an Elizabeth minister, the capacity for friendship and compassion are required, not professional credentials, but some members, such as nurses, have welcome expertise.

Women who call Elizabeth Ministry often need just emotional support, but some need material things: baby supplies, car seats, or clothing. The members prepare gift bags for every baby born at the local hospital, and deliver them—a simple and thoughtful ice-breaker.

With the help of the parish, they raise funds and collect items through special events throughout the year. The ministry is heavy on service and light on meetings, coming together only two or three times a year.

Today, Darlyne's daughter, who influenced her decision to begin a chapter of Elizabeth ministry, is herself a married mother of five. Besides this daughter, Darlyne has 5 other daughters, 2 sons, 28 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. She says she is "truly blessed... what a beautiful Mother's Day I have each year."

For more information on Elizabeth Ministry write, call, e-mail the founder, Jeannie Hannemann at 120 W. 8th St., Kaukauna, WI 54130; 920-766 9380; info@elizabethministry.com; or check the web site: www.elizabethministry.com

Everything went as planned for the annual Novena of Our Lady of Sorrows. Our Lady was in control. Even when Ike threatened, I just knew that it would not stop the novena. Because we went through all that we did to get it started, we proved to her that we were willing to go through with it.

Fr. Al Bermudez, SOSM, conducted the Healing Service. We had two rows of chairs lined up, one on each side of the aisle, between the pews and the altar. Father said that he felt that the line was never-ending. We do not have the luxury of catchers available, so the chairs worked very well.

The night of the procession, four men carried Our Lady on the bier, up the aisle and placed her on the altar, as we sang the Mother of Sorrows song written by Dottie Rodrigue. Msgr. Ray Hebert, the retired pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, gave a homily on Our Lady of Sorrows, including the history of the feast. He is schooled on the subject, especially since her feast day is his birthday, as well. After his talk, he invited everyone to bring up their flowers to Our Lady, as we sang another love song to her.

After benediction, we presented Msgr. Hebert with a gift for his birthday, a bust of Our Lady of Sorrows. It was beautiful. It isn't easy to find something that was not a duplicate, since we gave him a gift each year, but we did. He really loved it. He had to come down from the altar and show it to everyone.

Considering the situation of the area during this period, we had from 30 to 50 people attending each night.

We feel that the Novena was a great success. It wasn't as grandiose as it had been in the earlier days, but I know that Our Lady was pleased. After all, she made everything happen.

We all felt 1-at peace about it; 2-joyful about it; 3-it bore fruit (the people who attended were touched). All 3 are signs of knowing that you have done God's Will.



Ladysmith, WI
St. Juliana Community
Mary Ornberg, SOSM

We gave a party and everybody came! To promote our Secular Servite Community, St. Juliana in Ladysmith, WI, and to celebrate the 775th Anniversary of the Servite Order, in conjunction with the Servite Sisters, we sponsored an open house at the Motherhouse. It was a huge success!

Gathering at the river was a wonderful theme for entertaining the guests at this beautiful Convent on the banks of the Flambeau River. Planning took months and lots of work for our members and the Sisters prior to and during the day. The results showed the thought and energy that had gone into it.

Rather than depending solely on advertising to assure a good attendance, we also mailed out invitations to those we thought most likely to be interested. That was the easy part. Our Assistant Prioress, Maryann Luplow, poured her heart and soul into the remaining tasks. She and her committee did a fabulous job! Not only did they have interesting and creative ideas, they worked out practical plans and engaged our whole community, along with the Sisters, into a smooth running team that brought this wonderful celebration to fruition.

We began with a gracious welcome by our Prioress, Tilly Galetka, to the 96 guests seated in the convent's tranquil chapel. As with all Servite gatherings, we then joined in thanking God, praising God and asking for God's continued blessings on the whole world. We remembered the



dedication of the centuries of Servites who preceded us and recalled the life of Mary, our inspiration. For this lovely prayer time, as always, we were indebted to our Spiritual Assistant Sister Marguerite Samz, OSM.



Cheryl Tatrow, our community treasurer, sang the theme song: "Shall We Gather at the River", which was a stirring introduction for our primary speaker: Sister Barbara Thomalla, OSM. Sister Barbara gave a wonderful explanation of what it means to be a Servite and a fine overview of the Servite Order from the beginnings in 1233 through the present. She spoke of the friars as well as the sisters. We enjoyed it all, especially what Sister Barbara told us about the founding of the Servite Sisters of Ladysmith. We concluded with a short talk on the Secular Order by former Prioress, Mary Ornberg, who explained what the secular orders are, how they developed, and specifically the spirituality of the Secular Servites. Mary also gave an explanation of the Secular Order scapular and touched upon the development of St. Juliana Community over the past 22 years.



We then took time to tour the Motherhouse. The Sisters accompanied by the Secular Servites guided groups in visiting the various sections of the Motherhouse. At the conclusion of the tours, all gathered in the convent dining room to celebrate and enjoy colorful platters of finger-food and cake.

Happy 775th Anniversary, dear fellow Servites! Come to Ladysmith to visit us and enjoy our famous Northern hospitality!

SERVITE FAMILY GATHERINGS

“A Day with Thomas Merton” was the theme of the Day of Recollection for the Secular Servites of the greater Chicago area. Sister Theresa Sandok, OSM, congregational leader of the Ladysmith Seville Sisters was the presenter for the day. Secular Servites gathered together from the following communities: Our Lady of Sorrows, Chicago; Annunciata, Chicago; Assumption, Chicago; Sts. Alexis & Juliana, Hillside; Our Lady of Marian Lake, Plainfield. The Secular Servites of the Chicago area have been organizing and participating in this annual gathering for many years now. It is truly a celebration of our Servite charism and spirituality and a strengthening of the bonds among all in our Servite family.



St. Philip Benizi Parish, Fullerton, CA, celebrated its 50th Anniversary on Sunday, August 24, 2008. The Prior General, Fra Angel Ruiz Garnica, OSM, concelebrated the Mass in English and presided and preached at the Mass in Spanish. It was a wonderful opportunity for the Secular Servites of both communities in St. Philip Benizi community to meet and share with the Prior Generalas well as with various other Servite Friars who attended this special celebration from around the United States of America. The two communities in St. Philip Benizi parish are: Salve Regina (English-speaking) and Nuestra Señora de los Dolores (Spanish-speaking).





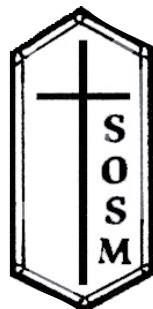
Secular Servites of New Jersey and Connecticut gathered together at Our Lady of Hungary Church, Perth Amboy, New Jersey to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows and the 775th Anniversary of the foundation of the Order. Fr. Vidal Martínez, OSM presented a brief history of the Order, from its beginnings to contemporary times. Fr. Vidal used pictures of historical Servite locations and individuals to assist the participants in learning more of our Servite historical roots. The participants took time to share with each other, in small groups, their responses to the questions in the program: “Open Hearts and Homes.” Fr. David Gallegos, OSM spoke about “Being a Servite Today.” All activities and celebrations were conducted in Spanish. Of course, the gathering and sharing included a delicious Puerto Rican lunch, to the delight of all present. Congratulations to Providencia Pardo, OSSM, prioress, who, together with the members of her community in Perth Amboy, organized all the details of the day. The two communities that participated in this gathering were: Santa María Reina de la Paz, Perth Amboy, New Jersey and Nuestra Señora de la Providencia, Hartford, Connecticut.

Secular Servite News is published by the Office of the National Assistant to the Servite Secular Order

Kindly address all correspondence to:

**Fr. Vidal Martinez, O.S.M.
Order of Friar Servants of Mary
3121 W Jackson Blvd
Chicago IL 60612-2729
osmsecular@aol.com**

**www.servite.org
www.servidimaria.org**



Coming Servite Feasts

October

**3 - Bl Maria Guadalupe Ricart Olmos
25 - Bl John Angelo Porro**

November

**16 - All Saints of the Order
17 - Commemoration of All Deceased Servites, Benefactors, Relatives and Friends**

December

**10 - Bl Jerome of Sant' Angelo in Vado
15 - Bl Bonvantage of Pistoia**

January

**12 - St Anthony Pucci
15 - Bl James the Almsgiver**