

Secular Servite News

Summer - Fall 2007



LAY SPIRITUALITY

By Fr. John Fontana, OSM

Rather than define "spirituality," let's just say that it is not the same thing as "religion." It is possible for people to recite a creed, obey commandments, read the catechism and learn canon law (the 4 C's of religion), and still not be living a spiritual life. Spirituality is about LIVING according to what we believe, and sharing the LOVE that we have received from an unconditionally loving God.

At the heart of what we believe and live is a lay person named Jesus, from Nazareth, the presence of God in human flesh. He lived and died so that we'll have life in abundance. And ever since His resurrection everything in creation can be considered "holy," because it is all filled with the presence of God, and all has the potential of saying something about God to us. This implies that how we view and care for our bodies, what we feel and dream about, our work and our rest, spending money and spending spare time, making love and making a living, our respect for the natural world, how we choose to vote, and how we relate to spouses, family, friends, colleagues and strangers... are all part of a Christian spirituality. Every bush can be on fire, every person the real presence of Christ's Body and every encounter a revelation of God. It can all be "unceasing" prayer. But what I'm saying here is not what we have always been taught.

Organized religions have often tried to "locate" the holy, the presence of God, in particular places and times, though God can't be captured, reduced to or isolated within space and time. If we call Sunday holy, does that mean that Monday is not? If Church is holy, then is there no chance of finding God at work, school or a store? Such a separation of what can be called holy, from what is not, has led to such divisions as secular and sacred, body and soul, earth and heaven, woman and man, lay person and clergy... clearly giving one priority over the other. People who distribute the Eucharist and proclaim the Word of God are called "ministers," but members of St. Vincent de Paul Society, who feed the hungry, or people who

gather to pray for others are not. And everything connected with earth, the body, the feminine, and the gift of sexuality, has been called "merely human" and associated with weakness and sinfulness. We have downgraded the human in order to upgrade the spiritual. One Vatican II document called the split between the faith which we profess and our daily lives "one of the more serious errors of our age."

In recent years, people have become more aware of God's presence and action in their ordinary human lives. We might say that "lay spirituality" is about this presence and action of God in people who hear the Word (not only in Church, but in the world) and who respond in the ordinary circumstances for their everyday lives, at home, work and in society. After the Council, many people saw themselves as holy as full members of the Church for the first time, simply because they're baptized.

When all is said and done, spirituality is mostly about what God's Spirit does in and through us. But when all the people of God are encouraged to cooperate with that Spirit, in the creative building up of the Kingdom, there is an incredible richness that would not exist without the talented lay people who bring new life, talent and energy to the Church, along with deeper dimensions of hospitality, compassion and collaboration.

As a brother Servite, I am always happy when Church leadership fosters greater human and spiritual maturity in all the baptized. When people leave infancy, and grow into the fullness of their goodness, holiness and giftedness for ministry, it's a sign of a sound spirituality. I pray that the Servite Community, growing mostly in the Secular Order, will continue to contribute to this growing up of the church's laity into the fullness of life that baptism has always promised - and which God's spirit has been enabling the whole Church to finally recognize.

SALVE REGINA COMMUNITY
St. Philip Benizi Parish
Fullerton, CA

The participants in the UNIFAS Conference at The Grotto (Portland, OR) reported on their experience. All were enthusiastic. The main topic was Spirituality in a Multicultural Church – and a favorite exercise was with the help of photos...finding God in disparate situations and experiences, people and, even, objects. It sounded like a grand Servite reunion of (friars) priests and brothers, sisters, and Secular Servites.

ASSUMPTION COMMUNITY
Assumption Parish
Denver, CO

The Servite Secular Order is still functioning in Assumption Parish! We say the Sorrowful Mother Rosary at 8:00AM the first Saturday of every month. This is followed by Mass at 8:30AM. After Mass, Fr. Gabriel Ramaciotti, OSM, our Spiritual Assistant, gives a short, spiritual talk. We then proceed to our meeting and refreshments.

We are a group of men and women (ages 18 & up) who support each other in our marital, family and social life and are actively involved in the word. Our first commitment is to our families and their needs. Many of us are very active in our Parish as Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, in the Choir, visiting the sick, etc. In the coming months, we will be getting involved in the Right to Life Amendment. We will be trying to inform our parishioners and others about this amendment. We will attend Mass together at our Parish to remember Bro. Philip Eikemeyer, OSM. We have missed his since he left our Parish and are very sorry to hear about his death. May he rest in peace.

OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL COMMUNITY
Denver, CO

On Saturday, June 23, 2007, many of the members of our community came to participate in a day of formation on the charism and spirituality of the Order of Servants of Mary. Fr. Vidal Martínez, OSM, the National Assistant, conducted this day of spiritual formation. Fr. Vidal helped us to understand better the special vocation in the Church to which we have been called: to be Secular Servants of Mary. We felt rejuvenated and encouraged to continue living this commitment with more enthusiasm and confidence. On Sunday, June 24, 2007, at the 9:30AM Mass, we renewed our Promise as Secular Servants of Mary. We look forward to continuing this practice of renewing the Promise every year, to keep those words of commitment and promise ever present in our minds and in our hearts. We continue to work to attract others to come and join us in our Secular Order community.



Members of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Community, Denver, CO, celebrate the day all renewed their Promise, accompanied by Fr. Tim Kremen, OSM, Fr. Gabriel Weber, OSM, and Fr. Vidal Martinez, OSM

FRATERNIDAD NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA SALUD SANTIAGO, REPUBLICA DOMINICANA Francis Lantigua, OSSM, Prior

Hoy somos instituidos en la familia de los Siervos, y nos preguntaremos qué vamos hacer. La respuesta es ser santos, ser Siervos ejemplares, Siervos dóciles a la Palabra y hacerla carne en los demás, como lo hizo María.

Contagiamos a otros con el virus de la bondad del amor y el servicio, seamos Siervos atentos al que sufre y al que necesita nuestro consuelo. Pongamos nuestra mirada en Jesús, El está con nosotros, dejémosnos guiar por El, no hay que temer. Digámosle un “sí” sincero.

Iniciemos esta nueva travesía hacia la santidad. Este camino a la santidad conlleva sacrificios, dolor, inquietud, y seguiremos a María, que dio todos esos pasos para seguir a Jesús. Entramos a formar parte en una escuela rica en espiritualidad, que es la Orden Seglar, no somos extraterrestres sino personas que hemos decidido a vivir y a estar sumergidos en la fuente evangélica.

Este hacer la Promesa, nos induce a comprometernos más con Cristo y a pertenecer a una Orden religiosa a manera seglar, porque estamos en el mundo comprometidos con nuestra familia, con nuestros hijos a transmitirles valores morales y espirituales.

Sintámonos felices por ser llamados por Dios a esta vocación. No olvidemos que tenemos que crecer juntos, que tenemos que luchar juntos, y tenemos que ayudarnos mutuamente. Por eso es que debemos estar mensualmente reunidos en fraternidad, para orar juntos y apoyarnos mutuamente. Seamos grandes modelos para los demás, como María es para nosotros nuestro modelo para seguir a Cristo. Andemos con María de la mano, sintamos su silencio, para que exista el ruido de la palabra que nos anima a seguir a Cristo.



Los Seglares Siervos de Maria de la Fraternidad Nuestra Señora de la Salud, Santiago, República Dominicana visitan a los niños y niñas pobres para compartir el día con ellos.



Nuestro propósito ha de ser cumplir la regla de la vida y los estatutos de la Orden. Ser fieles a este compromiso que anunciamos hoy. Oremos los unos por los otros y oremos por esta fraternidad, que quiere dar los pasos en esta “Quisquilla la bella”.

Que María sea nuestra inspiración para cumplir la Palabra de Dios.



Fraternidad Nuestra Señora de la Salud, Santiago, Dominican Republic

ST. PEREGRINE COMMUNITY
St. Catherine of Siena Parish
Kissimmee, FL

Our community had a good representation of our members at the UNIFAS Conference that took place at The Grotto, Portland, Oregon, July 6-8, 2007. One member explained that “he realized at the UNIFAS gathering that we are part of a BIG group of Servites – part of Africa, Spain, Mexico, etc. He explained how these meetings were so informative and inspiring. If and when the next UNIFAS gathering takes place, he will be sure to participate! In order to assist some community members to be able to participate in national Servite activities such as this one, we are always looking for ways to raise the necessary funds. Any suggestions?

Almost since the establishment of the Servite Secular Order in Florida (Kissimmee and Palm Bay; later St. Petersburg; now Lady Lake), we have participated in a joint Advent Day of Recollection, each December. We are looking forward to the visit of Fr. Conrad Borntrager, OSM, Annunciata Parish, Chicago, Illinois for our next Day of Recollection on Saturday, December 15, 2007, at Mary Queen of the Universe Shrine, Orlando, FL.

ST. PHILIP BENIZI COMMUNITY
Holy Cross Parish
St. Petersburg, FL

We now have a new Pastor. When our Community was established, Fr. Tom Anastasia was quite supportive and open to having the Servite Secular Order meet at the Parish. We are very grateful to Fr. Tom’s spiritual guidance and assistance as our Pastor. He built up a very vibrant parish and will be missed. Our new Pastor is Fr. Paul Kochu, a native of India. We look forward to continue a positive and encouraging relationship with our new Pastor. We have to give him the time to acclimate himself to our Parish. He has expressed that he has some knowledge of the Secular Order. We are truly blessed to have Fr. Tom Tobin, Wally’s brother, as our Spiritual Assistant. He is an great asset to our Servite Secular community.

We are planning and looking forward to the celebration of the Rite of the Promise for three candidates who will become Secular Servites as members of our community. They have participated with enthusiasm in the formation sessions offered to prepare them to make their Promise. There are four of us who are looking forward to participating in the Third National Conference of the Secular Order, October 26-28, 2007.

Congratulations - Felicidades

Welcome to our Servite Family
Bienvenidos a nuestra Familia Servita

Secular Servites Promises made in 2006

PROMISES MADE IN 2006

February 8

UT, Orem
St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Paul Walstad, Sr.



Paul Walstad of Provo, UT, makes his Promise as a Secular Servite at San Felipe Parish, Wendover, UT.

February 17

OH, Berea
St. Juliana Community
Frank Santora

February 18

IL, Chicago
Our Lady of Sorrows Community
Lamont W. Lee



St. Mary, Source of Our Joy Community, Assumption Parish, Chicago, IL.

February 19

CA, Fullerton
Salve Regina Community
Ricki Bradbury
Paulette Martin
Joan Reilly
Roger Stollenweck

May 7

AL, Mobile
Blessed James, Defender of the Poor
Esther Johnson

May 7

IL, Hillside
Sts. Alexis and Juliana Community
Leona Hansen
Ed Landmesser
Deacon Angelo Marotto
Charmaine Ouimette



Santa Maria Reina de la Paz Community, Perth Amboy, NJ, celebrates with Idalia Cabrera (center) on the day she made her Promise as a Secular Servant of Mary.

May 10

WI, Ladysmith
St. Juliana Community
Cheryl Tatrow

May 17

WI, Rice Lake
St. Peregrine Community
Mark Drukula

July 1

CO, Denver
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Community
Carol Evans

July 23

LA, Marrero
St. Anthony Pucci Community
Carmen Hernandez
José Hernandez

August 4

CO, Denver
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Community
Rudy Brychel

August 13

AL, Mobile
Blessed James, Defender of the Poor
Mary Mark

August 13

FL, St. Petersburg
St. Philip Benizi Community
Rita Drinan

October 30

IL, Chicago
St. Mary, Source of Our Joy Community
Mary Ann Kevin
Katherine Malhas
Carol Masonberg
Muriel McDarrah
Rose Mary Reeves
Diana Riske
Dennis Waldeck
Sheila Hogan Waldeck

November 11

IL, Blue Island
Our Sorrowful Mother Community
Deacon Bob Jossey

November 18

CT, Hartford
Our Lady of Providence Community
Francisco Acevedo
Myrtha Acevedo
Carmen Malavé
Ana Natal
Teresa Rosario
Carmen E. Rodriguez

December 9

FL, Kissimmee
St. Peregrine Community
Ana E. Firpo
Victor Firpo
Rosita Gomez
Maximina Marquez
Olga Méndez
Elba Roman
Antonio Sanchez
Carmen Sanchez

December 9

FL, Palm Bay
Mary, Queen of the Servants Community
Jim McCandless



Salve Regina Community, Fullerton, CA

OUR SORROWFUL MOTHER COMMUNITY

**Mantellate Servite Sisters
Blue Island, IL**

Our meeting on the second Saturday of every month begins with the Liturgy of the Hours, which is followed by Mass. After Mass and refreshments, we continue with a community discussion on various topics, for example: What can we do to fight immorality in our lives? Have your prayers ever been answered but not in the same way you wanted? Who gave the Devil his power? How do you deal with disappointment? What was Cain's motive to kill Abel? How do we react to the blessings God gives us? Our meeting closes with The Prayer for the Church and the Order. Fr. Conrad Borntrager, OSM is our Spiritual Assistant.

ANNUNCIATA COMMUNITY Chicago, IL

A special thanks to all who made the Bake Sale a success! Thanks to all the bakers who brought wonderful cookies, cakes and other such things, and to those who volunteered to help with the packaging and selling before and after all the Masses. The bake sale brought in a total of \$704.80. to this must be added the \$251.00 from the raffle on two quilts... The total for the day was \$995.80, and the Council voted to add \$44.20 from the general fund to make our donation to the Missions an even \$1,000.00. The funds will be sent to the AIDS program in the Servite Missions of Zululand, South Africa. Fr. Mel Loftus, OSM, the Servite Superior in Zululand, wrote that the HIV/AIDS program is three pronged: Home based care; Provision of anti-retroviral drugs to confirmed AIDS patients; Orphans/Vulnerable Children program.



St. Juliana Community, Ladysmith, WI



Ana Serrano es acompañada por su hija y esposo, Ali y Ana Maria Rodriguez, al celebrar el día de su Promesa como Seglar Sierva de Maria.

Caring for our elderly sisters and brothers
Our Lady of Sorrows Secular Order Fraternity
Kisoga, Uganda
Fr. Robert Kyeune, OSM, Assistant

Ave Maria!

This is to inform you that the work for which you sent the donations has been done and the elderly are now living in a conducive environment. With this money we managed to plaster the kitchen, construct a veranda around the house to improve on the drainage which was destroying the foundation. We realized that the house had no dump proof material and this would have been dangerous in the future so we fixed that as well. We painted the rooms and outside plus the iron sheets, support bars and all the doors and windows. The work took sometime to finish due to the heavy down pours which have lasted for 4 months- this is quite unusual.



STS. ALEXIS & JULIANA COMMUNITY
St. Domitilla Parish
Hillside, IL

The Community sponsored a day devoted to prayer for an increase in religious vocations at their Parish: ADORATION FOR VOCATIONS, during this past Lenten Season. The urgent need for vocations for priests, brothers, sisters, and committed lay people was the main prayer intention during the day-long silent prayer event. Vocation prayer cards and information was available in the Church to help focus attention on prayers for an increase in the number of Diocesan priests as well as vocations to various religious orders such as the Carmelites, Dominicans, Servites, Benedictines, Franciscans and others.



Fr. Anthony Mbaebgu, Assistant, and the members of St. Juliana Community, Lakeview, OR, accompanied by their spouses, dining out together.



Visitation of National Councilors to St. Anthony Pucci Community, Marrero, LA.

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Coming Servite Feasts

September

- 1 - Bl Joan of Florence**
- 6 - Bl Bonaventure of Forli**
- 15 - Our Lady of Sorrows**

October

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

November

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