



Summer 2023

# JESUITS WEST



## Sacred Lines: Seeking Transcendence With Jesuit Poets

Page 12

Path to Truth and  
Understanding

Page 2

Donor Profile

Page 4

New Jesuit School  
Coming to Seattle

Page 8

Ignatian Spirituality  
Retreats

Page 10

Living in Gratitude

Page 16

Jesuit Profile

Page 22

## Provincial's Letter



*Christ has no body but yours.  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours.  
Yours are the eyes  
with which He looks compassion on this world.  
Yours are the feet  
with which He walks to do good.  
Yours are the hands  
with which He blesses all the world.*

*St. Teresa of Avila*

Dear Friends,

This beautiful prayer by St. Teresa of Avila seems like a perfect way for me to introduce you to our summer issue of Jesuits West magazine.

As I turn the pages of the magazine, I am reminded of all the wonderful people in our 10-state province who are looking with compassionate eyes toward those who are hurt and suffering. Our cover story is about Jesuit poets in our province and the way their prose helps to illuminate the divine presence. We also have a story about Fathers John and Steve Privett, two brothers ordained to the priesthood on the very same day, whose combined century of service has been devoted to both shaping future generations and caring for those who came before us.

This issue is imbued with stories about our lay collaborators who are using their gifts to serve our brothers and sisters on the margins of society. Among them are the dedicated individuals who came together during an economic downturn and a pandemic to start a new high school in Seattle to provide underserved students with a college preparatory education. Then there is a story about the lay team at the Ignatian Spirituality Project and their work to bring overnight retreats to people struggling with homelessness and addiction.

All of the people profiled in our magazine are following in the footsteps of Christ, something I was privileged to experience in a very concrete way during a recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land. St. Teresa's line about "yours are the feet" was never more real than when I visited the places where Jesus walked, preached and healed.



*With fellow provincials in the Holy Land*

Most powerful for me was our daybreak visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which encompasses Golgotha, where Jesus suffered and died, and his nearby tomb. As I knelt down to touch the place where Jesus was crucified, I was overwhelmed. I thought about his suffering and how humbling it is to consider all that he endured for us. I thought too about how healing it is to know that Jesus bore what is truly unimaginable so that we may live forever with God.

I am proud of the work we do in Jesuits West, proud of all those in our province who serve as the eyes, feet and hands with which God blesses the world.

Please know of my prayers and my deep gratitude.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sean Carroll, SJ".

Sean Carroll, SJ  
Provincial, Jesuits West

# JESUITS WEST

Summer 2023

## JESUITS WEST MAGAZINE

### PROVINCIAL OFFICE

Fr. Sean Carroll, SJ  
Provincial

Fr. Michael Gilson, SJ  
Socius

### EDITOR

Tracey Primrose  
Provincial Assistant for Communications  
tprimrose@jesuits.org

### DESIGN

Lorina Herbst  
Graphic Designer

### ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

Siobhán Lawlor  
Vice President for Advancement &  
Provincial Assistant  
slawlor@jesuits.org

Fr. John Mossi, SJ  
Benefactor Relations  
jmossi@jesuits.org

Fr. Samuel Bellino, SJ  
Director of Legacy Planning  
sbellino@jesuits.org

Donna Gray  
Regional Director of Advancement,  
Southern California and Arizona  
dgray@jesuits.org

Laurie Gray  
Regional Director of Advancement,  
Northwest  
lgray@jesuits.org

Anne Holloway  
Senior Philanthropy Officer  
aholloway@jesuits.org

*Jesuits West* is published two times a year  
by the Jesuits West Province  
P.O. Box 86010, Portland, OR 97286-0010  
www.jesuitswest.org

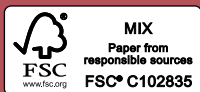
Like us on Facebook at:  
www.facebook.com/jesuitswest

Follow us on Twitter at:  
www.twitter.com/jesuitswest

The comments and opinions expressed  
in *Jesuits West* Magazine are those of the authors  
and editors and do not necessarily reflect  
official positions of Jesuits West.

## Table of Contents

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Page 2  | The Sometimes Painful, Often Graced<br>Path to Truth and Understanding |
| Page 4  | Donor Profile:<br>A Life of Service Grounded in Jesuit Ideals          |
| Page 6  | The Rocky Challenge  |
| Page 8  | A New School Offers Hope to Seattle Students                           |
| Page 10 | Ignatian Spirituality Project: A Safe Place to<br>Connect with God     |
| Page 12 | Sacred Lines: Seeking Transcendence with<br>Jesuit Poets               |
| Page 16 | Living in Gratitude  |
| Page 20 | Spiritual Reflection: Crooked Lines                                    |
| Page 22 | Jesuit Profile:<br>The Brothers Privett                                |
| Page 26 | News from the Province   |
| Page 30 | In Memoriam  |
| Page 32 | Jesuits West Happenings  |
| Page 33 | Advancement Director's Letter  |





# THE SOMETIMES PAINFUL, OFTEN GRACED PATH TO TRUTH AND UNDERSTANDING

By Ryan Booth



*Ryan Booth in his hometown of La Conner, Washington*

My mom tells a story about my Grandma Philomena Cheer. She was an Upper Skagit tribal member who attended the Cushman Indian School in Puyallup, Washington, as a little girl. When my grandma was an elder, my mom prodded her to feel outrage at her treatment at the Native American boarding school. My grandma only wanted to tell stories about her “cute uniform” with a cape. Finally, my grandma had enough and shot my mom a steely gaze. My grandma’s last words on the subject were, “Why would I want to pass on the pain?”

The pain felt by my grandma and tens of thousands of other Native children started with the passage of the Indian Civilization Act of 1819. The legislation led to rules, policies and practices that effectively served as forced assimilation and indoctrination for generations of Native students. Ripped from their families and sent to boarding schools that were often run by religious orders, including the Jesuits, students were prohibited from speaking their Native languages or acknowledging their Indigenous cultures. In 1892, one of the architects of the boarding school program, Brigadier General Richard Henry Pratt, famously said, “kill the Indian in him, and save the man” about the need to “civilize” Native people. Although most boarding schools had closed by the 1970s, the wounds are still deeply felt across Indian Country.

When I began my life as a Jesuit, I was deeply moved by the image of a pilgrim and the idea of a pilgrimage. In the novitiate, my novice master sent me on a pilgrimage to visit Native American missions run by the Jesuits—from

the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota to Swinomish in Northwest Washington. The journey took a few months, but the impact of that experience would come back to me 25 years later, demanding an even deeper faith and trust.

In 2022, Father Sean Carroll, SJ, the provincial of Jesuits West, asked me to examine the history of Jesuit-run Native American boarding schools in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. His request came on the heels of the discovery of unmarked graves at a Canadian boarding school and a 2021 Department of the Interior plan to launch “a comprehensive effort to recognize the troubled legacy of federal Indian boarding school policies.”

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the reservations I had visited on my novice pilgrimage would have had bustling Jesuit-run boarding schools with students who looked very much like me. But by the time I visited in 1997, most of the schools were long gone, and those that remained were in tribal hands.

My main job was to research Native boarding schools, identify archival records, and then communicate with local tribes about what I had found. One of my first stops was the expansive Jesuit Archives & Research Center (JARC) in St. Louis, which houses the collective memory of 16 past and current administrative provinces of the Society of Jesus in the United States.

While I had hoped to find more Native stories, the name of the archives tells its own story. It is the JESUIT archives, so the stories being told there are primarily of the Jesuits themselves. This is called the “principle of organization” by archivists—they accept materials that fit their own goals.

The second realization was what historians like me call “silences.” Native people only make cameo appearances in the Jesuit archives; the material that was left was uneven at best or sometimes nonexistent. This is partly explained by the principle above, but there are other reasons. Some missions were plagued by fires, while others might have



*Ryan with family and friends on the day he professed first vows in the Society of Jesus*

experienced apathetic or overzealous administrators intent on tidying up records by dumping old ones. In the end, it created gaps, or silences, in the records of these Native American boarding schools.

What exists in these archives, though, is being made available to the impacted Indigenous communities through the digitization of records and photographs. A few Native communities in Alaska and Montana have already benefited, finding important photographic and other resources, including maps. JARC diligently worked with these communities to digitize and share this information.

History can be a tricky business. The discipline itself still hews closely to written records, but in recent years has begun to accept oral history as acceptable. Where Jesuit historical resources may be lacking, much of the raw data (names, attendance records, tribal affiliations) still exists at the National Archives and Records Administration.

And for me, there was another source of information: memory. Once I began taking my findings to Native people themselves, it opened the floodgates. While some, like my Grandma Cheer, may be reluctant to tap into potentially painful memories, others are willing to share their stories to see if we can fill in gaps in an otherwise incomplete historical record.

In the summer of 2022, I sat in the rectory of De Smet, Idaho's Sacred Heart Mission, which was founded by the Jesuits in 1877. There I found the mission's pastor, Father Peter Byrne, SJ, and CeCe Curtis-Cook and Cindy Ladeaux, tribal members who are on the parish staff, waiting to hear what I had learned at the Jesuit Archives. I told them about the early 20th-century records I saw of a three-weeklong Christmas celebration at the mission, which included Christmas carols sung by the boarding school children, processions and campouts on the mission grounds. There were also notes about Jesuit missionaries speaking "Indian" at Masses, confessions and other celebrations.

This prompted a discussion of the hymns still being sung in the southern interior Salish language on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation, about an hour down the road. Cindy relayed a story about one of her relatives, who attended the boarding school at De Smet, complaining about how the Jesuits ate better than the students. This prompted me to add that I had found a decades-old letter from a provincial admonishing the Jesuits to live more simply and to eat what the students ate. I hadn't made that connection until we chatted over the rectory table.

The moment in De Smet reminded me of another table in a rectory in Browning, Montana, with Father Mike McHugh, SJ. In 1997, while on pilgrimage, I stopped to spend time with him and with the Blackfeet people. Any



*Fr. Mike McHugh, SJ, (1921- 2007) and his dog, Billy, on the Blackfeet Reservation in Browning, Montana*

visitors to Mike's house were conscripted to the kitchen to help cook, which I did. We ate and began our dinner with a conversation centered on the question, "Where did you find Jesus today?" We would recount interactions with homeless folks, elders, parish staff, parishioners and Mike's favorite Rez dog, Billy. The lesson for this young novice was that God is all around us if we have the eyes to see.

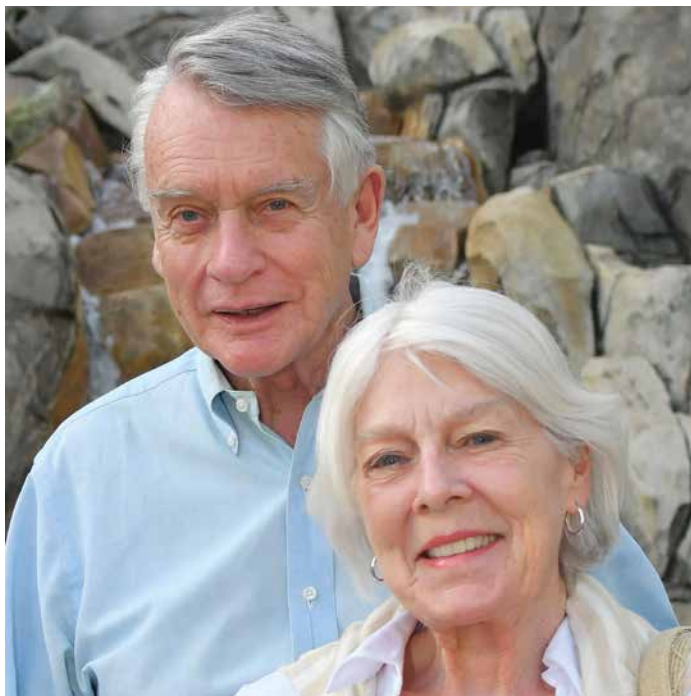
The moment in De Smet revealed to me the power of these stories, as well as a possibility of a way forward. In the end, the only way around the boarding school pain is through it. It is equal parts exhausting and exhilarating to finally start assembling some narrative to this complicated story. We still have so much work to do, but the willingness of the Jesuits, the Native people we continue to serve and God's grace will pave the way.

Much has changed since my pilgrimage in 1997, but that lesson from Fr. Mike remains. Sometimes finding Jesus means suffering and pain, but we know in our hearts that there is a way through it all. It is that hope that gets me out of bed in the morning to, once again, trudge the road towards a more complete truth and understanding. ■

*Dr. Ryan W. Booth is an Upper Skagit tribal member and former Jesuit scholastic (1996-2001). He is a history professor at Washington State University in Pullman.*

# A LIFE OF SERVICE GROUNDED IN JESUIT IDEALS

By Paul Totah



*Chuck and Nancy Collins*

Chuck Collins made his living through his business ventures, but he considers his varied career as rooted in public service.

This was true of his 29 years in the U.S. Army and Army Reserve, where he retired as a brigadier general, and his work in state and local government, where he served as the director of Seattle Metro Transit, chair of several Washington state commissions—charged with oversight of state colleges and universities as well as K-12 educational reform—and the myriad jobs and board positions he has held since the 1960s.

That dedication to service, he notes, came from his time in Jesuit schools and has led him and his wife, Nancy, to make several major gifts over the years to the Jesuits West Province and to his alma mater, Gonzaga Preparatory School in Spokane, Washington.

“Nancy and I want to help the province care for the older Jesuits and to continue its 500-year mission,” Mr. Collins says. “We wanted Gonzaga Prep to be a school for all students, not just for those who can afford its tuition.”

Mr. Collins pointed to one Jesuit in particular who shaped his values. As a senior in high school, Mr. Collins studied physics in a course taught by Father Joseph Showalter, SJ. “Despite my success, he gave me a B. I was mad as a hornet, and when I complained about the grade, he told me that I wasn’t trying hard enough. This eventually made an impression on me. He was more interested in how I would turn out as a human than in my GPA. By the time I graduated, I didn’t care about the grade anymore. I had learned something important about what it is to think like a Jesuit.”

In his freshman year at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, he took a New Testament class and read in the Gospel of Mark Jesus’ words to the rich man who asked how he could attain eternal life.

“After a lot of thought, I could see no answer other than becoming a Jesuit. I came home that Christmas and told the principal at Gonzaga that I wanted to join the Society. I only lasted 11 months in the order, however. I was OK with poverty and chastity, but obedience was the killer.”

After his time as a Jesuit, Mr. Collins enrolled at Gonzaga University and graduated with a degree in philosophy a semester early after the local draft board told him he would not be drafted. As the Vietnam War escalated and demands for troops increased, the board changed its mind and drafted him out of the University of Washington Law School. He spent a year as a private before the Army commissioned him as an Armor Second Lieutenant.

Later in 1967, Mr. Collins married Nancy Querna after meeting her on a blind date. “We had a horrendous argument about politics then. She had voted for Goldwater, and I thought that was akin to a mortal sin. Somehow, thank God, we had a second date and married while I was stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado.”

In 1968, the U.S. Army sent Mr. Collins to Vietnam, where he served for 11 months as an armored cavalry platoon leader and troop commander. During that time, he was wounded and awarded both the Silver and Bronze Stars.

“I look back and see my time in Southeast Asia as a doctoral program in leadership. I can trace much of the





*Chuck Collins in Vietnam*

rest of my life back to that experience. Forty years later, unfortunately, I suffered late-onset PTSD and felt guilt come roaring back. My wife is a saint for understanding and enduring my anger. I thank the VA for their support during

that time. In some real and profound way, I owe Nancy and the VA my life."

After returning from Vietnam and graduating with a master's degree in public administration, he took a job with King County, which comprises Seattle, and rose to the rank of chief administrative officer. He worked for John Spellman, another former Jesuit novice, who would later serve as governor of the state. "He was the finest man I have known," says Mr. Collins.

One public service job led to another, and Mr. Collins served for four years as the transit director of Seattle Metro. "I used to dread going to cocktail parties and listening to people tell me how we should be expanding our monorail, but I was able to expand the bus system,

helping Seattle Metro to become the fastest growing system in the U.S."

In 1970, he and his wife moved to Mercer Island, where they raised their two daughters. Then, after leaving Metro, Mr. Collins entered the private sector and served as senior vice president and general manager of a plastics manufacturing company headquartered in Norway.

"One night I found myself in a broken-down taxi stuck in the fog in Newfoundland. I began thinking about my best friend from Gonzaga Prep, Jay Trembley, and his last letter to me, which I received two days after I learned of his death in Vietnam. His letter was an eloquent statement that the purpose of life is to serve, and it compelled me to find a new way to serve the public good. It became what I grew to think of as the Jay Imperative."

That experience led Mr. Collins to reconnect with Gov. Spellman. "I told him I didn't want to be an employee. I was looking for a way to have one foot in the private sector and the other in the public sector. He then offered me a position on the Northwest Power Council to deal with several nuclear plants in bankruptcy."

Mr. Collins served on that council for four years, including two years as chair. Three later governors appointed him chair of other state and regional commissions, including ones involved in the oversight of K-12 education reform, the state colleges and universities, and the four-state regional power system.

*continued on page 25*

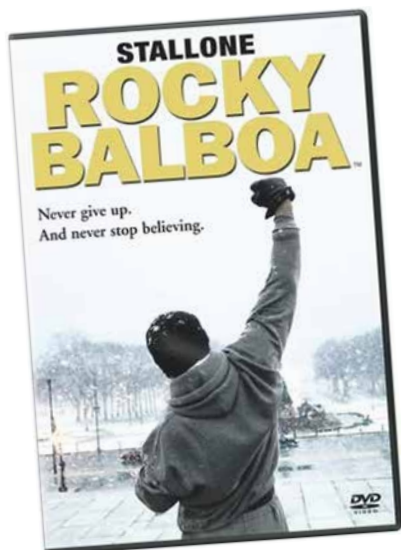


*The Collins family in a recent photo*

---

# THE ROCKY CHALLENGE

By Tracey Primrose



**"It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward; how much you can take and keep moving forward. That's how winning is done!"**



*Br. Tom Koller, SJ, always rolls with the punches.*

Julie Johnson, the activities director at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, the Jesuits West Province's senior care/retirement community in Los Gatos, California, never uttered the words printed above, but it sounds like something she would say.



*Julie Johnson, activities director at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center*

The quote is from Rocky Balboa, the small-time boxer and dogged hero who inspired six eponymous films and one extremely memorable theme song. Rocky is known for his perseverance and grit, two qualities that are not only desired, but required for anyone in their later years.

No wonder that Julie and her activities team asked the Sacred Heart Jesuit Center community to engage in the Rocky Challenge. This nationwide program, which benefits Special Olympics, invites participants to commit to run or walk 100 miles. Last September, Julie hosted an informational meeting for residents and staff. Ever the cheerleader, she told those gathered that if they signed up and started right away, they could make the December 31 deadline by committing to walk one mile per day.

"We wanted people to sign up right then because if they go back to their rooms, it won't happen. The idea is to capture them when you can. I told them that even the guys in walkers and wheelchairs can do one mile a day," Julie recalls.



Forty-four participants signed up, and Julie and her team created an oversized chart to record everyone's progress. They loaned out pedometers and also showed participants how to use their phones to determine how many miles they had moved each day. "The greatest thing was watching them put their pedometers in their pockets and head out the door."

Given the charts' prominent placement in the Sacred Heart Jesuit Center lobby, things got competitive quickly. If Julie was even a few minutes late putting a Rocky participant's mileage on the chart, she heard about it.

Sacred Heart Jesuit Center already had a "Walking Team," whose members enjoy twice weekly outings to local parks, where Jesuits can stroll alongside picturesque Lake Vasona and explore native plant trails. Some Rocky participants chose to stay closer to home, instead walking around the beautiful grounds that surround their hilltop home.

While some participants finished the challenge in record time, others came in just under the wire in late December. In the end, 21 participants went the distance. But as Julie says, "Everyone is a winner because it is all about staying healthy."



Fr. Dick "The Kid" Cobb, SJ, 91, never throws in the towel.

In February, participants were invited to lace up for a Rocky Challenge medal ceremony. Not all participants made the event, but those who did were positively Balboan. ■



Julie Johnson, kneeling bottom right, with some of the Rocky Challenge participants.



*Quentin Orem, Katie Seltzer, Gaynell T. Walker, Paul Hogan, Michael Mott and Bob Ratliffe*

---

## A NEW SCHOOL OFFERS HOPE TO SEATTLE STUDENTS

By Paul Totah

In the summer of 2024, the inaugural class of Cristo Rey Jesuit Seattle, 100 freshmen or more, will walk through the doors of their new high school. Their tuition will be heavily subsidized by companies that will employ the students one day each week, offering job training, professional development and perhaps most importantly, the chance to break the cycle of poverty.

It took dozens of people—from community leaders to corporate and nonprofit executives to an archbishop and a Jesuit provincial—to realize this dream, an improbable turn of events because it happened during a pandemic and an economic downturn.

Quentin Orem, who directed a \$200,000 grant from his family's foundation to kickstart the project, pointed to those who laid the groundwork for the school, including Charles Catalano, an educational consultant who began the conversation in 2015.

Mr. Catalano worked with the Fulcrum Foundation, which supports Catholic education, and its then executive director, Anthony Holter, who introduced Mr. Catalano to Michael Mott, a director of business development at Amazon, who helped to launch the Jesuit-endorsed

Seattle Nativity School in 2013 to help economically challenged middle school students.

The project to establish Cristo Rey Jesuit Seattle took on new life when Mr. Orem moved to the Pacific Northwest after teaching at the Jesuits' Brophy College Preparatory in Phoenix. Mr. Orem was raised in a suburb outside Seattle where he preferred attending a public school, despite his parents' offer to send him to a Catholic school. "I had a notion that Catholic education was strict and no fun at all. You couldn't have paid me a million dollars to go to a Catholic school when I was a kid."

That changed when he attended Santa Clara University, where he earned his degree in philosophy and took part in the Casa de la Solidaridad Program, spending time in El Salvador before starting his teaching career.

In 2020, Mr. Orem's family asked him to return to the Northwest to serve as the first executive director of the Richard and Maude Ferry Foundation, named for his grandparents. In his second week on the job, he called the Cristo Rey Network to ask why there wasn't a Cristo Rey school in Seattle. "Then I called Michael Mott and asked him if he was ready for his next big project."

The two used the grant from the Ferry Foundation to hire Katie Seltzer to run a feasibility study, one of many steps the Cristo Rey Network requires before starting a new school. "Katie had worked at a Cristo Rey school in New York, and she was the most talented person for the job."

Ms. Seltzer, along with 45 volunteers, spent 10 months exploring whether the proposed school could meet all it was required to do, including raising \$2.5 million and finding 35 companies willing to hire students.

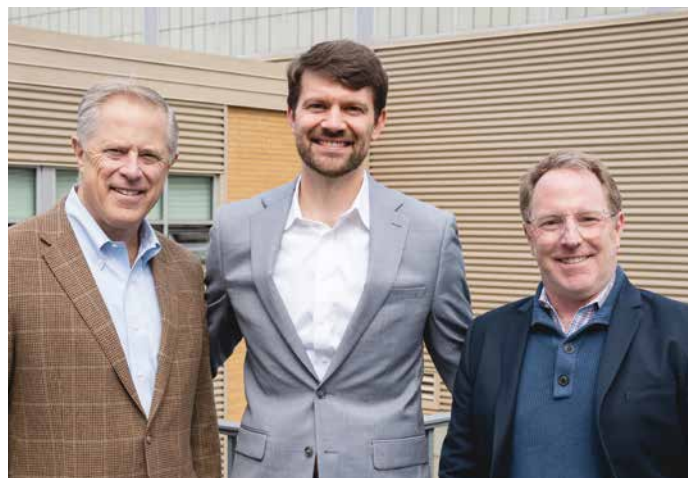


"We were able to raise \$3.6 million in pledges and have 34 companies and nonprofits committed to us," she noted. "And that number just keeps going up."

One high point for Ms. Seltzer was meeting students and families "who, through no fault of their own, haven't been granted the opportunities they deserve due to their economic status. We met with students who asked if they could work two days a week or overtime rather than one day a week. These sixth graders were jumping out of their seats to work and were eager to help their families pay for their own education. This spoke to a profound maturity on their part. Their parents were thrilled at the possibility of a Jesuit education for their children and wanted to know more about how the Cristo Rey Network partners with universities." Ms. Seltzer was recently hired to work as the school's vice president of corporate work study, helping to place students in jobs.

The team spearheading the school launch also recruited Gaynell T. Walker, a retired school administrator, to lead a community engagement effort. "Even though my career as an educator was in the public sector, this project resonated with me, as I was raised Catholic and am a parishioner at St. Paul Church, where the new school will be located."

She also found that "the response was overwhelmingly positive, especially from parents who were eager for their children to attend this school. This is just a wonderful



*Bob Ratliffe, Quentin Orem and Michael Mott*

opportunity and legacy for the archdiocese and the Seattle community to put kids on a trajectory to be successful in their future." Now a member of the school's board, she will continue her outreach efforts recruit students to apply to the new school.

Four other partnerships proved essential in realizing this dream. "Michael Mott and I knew from the start that we needed a ringer," said Mr. Orem. "We reached out to Bob Ratliffe, a former chair of Seattle University's Board of Trustees and a man who could open any door in Seattle."

Mr. Ratliffe, the president of Silver Creek Capital Management, recalled his first meeting with Mr. Orem and Mr. Mott. "I was tired of fundraising and wanted to get my hands dirty working in a food bank. Then I visited a Cristo Rey school in Atlanta and saw the students in their coats and ties eager to attend class or go to work. That's when I realized I wasn't going to be able to say no to this project."

Mr. Ratliffe expanded his fundraising efforts beyond the traditional Catholic community and was impressed by how quickly donors resonated with the project. "Sometimes the gifts blew me away. One family foundation initially said their gift might range between \$10,000 and \$30,000. Two weeks later, I received a check for \$500,000. People wanted to be part of this good work."

Finding companies ready to hire students, even coming out of a pandemic, proved easier than the team had imagined. "Companies want to be serious about diversity, equity and inclusion and are eager to hire a diverse workforce. This school is just what they need," said Mr. Ratliffe.



*Katie Seltzer and Gaynell T. Walker on a recent visit to the school that will house Cristo Rey Jesuit Seattle*

*continued on page 19*

---

# IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY PROJECT: A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT WITH GOD

By Becky Sindelar



*Ignatian Spirituality Project leaders gathered for a retreat at the Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House in Barrington, Illinois, in fall 2022.*

After escaping an abusive marriage, Leslie and her daughter first stayed with a friend, then in a hotel; when the money ran out, they ended up in a women's shelter in the San Diego area. Attending a retreat was the last thing on her mind. When she and her daughter were invited to an Ignatian Spirituality Project (ISP) retreat, her motivation was practical: They were told they'd get to sleep in beds, rather than the cots they were on at the shelter.

That's how she and her daughter ended up at an ISP women's overnight retreat in 2018 at St. Luis Rey Mission in Oceanside, California. The retreat proved to be more than just a better night's rest.

"My experience was of overwhelming gratitude and awe," recalls Leslie, who asked that we protect her privacy by not including her last name in this story. "I remember just how peaceful it was walking through the grounds and smelling the flowers and just taking in the sheer beauty. It was so different from what I considered ground zero of homelessness in downtown San Diego.

"What I got out of the program—and what I am still getting out of the program—is the message of hope and the acceptance of who you are. ISP doesn't give you a solution to your problems. But it does offer a safe place to connect to God or your higher power, and it provides a loving and caring environment where you can share your journey and connect with people who want to share the love of God without judgement."

## 25 Years of Spiritual Accompaniment

The Ignatian Spirituality Project was born 25 years ago in Chicago when Father Bill Creed, SJ, and his friend Ed Shurna, former executive director of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, were both seeking a way to care for the spiritual life of people recovering from homelessness and addiction.

The overnight retreat they created combined the 500-year-old tradition of Ignatian spirituality and many of the principles of the 12-step recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous. The goal was to offer hope and belonging in the face of despair and isolation.

"There's no preaching or advice given on an ISP retreat," Fr. Creed says. "Our retreat model centers on personal witness—the sharing of our stories and experiences in an atmosphere of trust and sacred listening."

A quarter century later, ISP has had 15,000 participants, and there are 22 affiliate regions in the network, including three in the Jesuits West Province: San Diego, Orange County and the Bay Area.

Ivette Valenzuela serves as the regional director of ISP for the West. She began the role in August 2022, after many years as a director of faith formation, first at her local parish and then at the Diocese of Orange. To better serve her community, she went back for her master's in pastoral



theology from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, where she was inspired by Ignatian spirituality.

Ms. Valenzuela was attracted to this new role at ISP because the work is grounded in faith in action, she says. “I wanted my ministry to make a direct impact, do something concrete.”

### Growing a Network of Hope

Today ISP offers overnight retreats, day programs and ongoing spiritual reflection groups, which are open to people of all faiths—or no faith background. A recent addition to their programming is a mobile app, ISP Journey, which offers one-hour spiritual reflections. “It’s a way people can continue to be part of the ISP community without being physically present,” says Ms. Valenzuela, such as if they move on from the shelter. It was also a great way for participants to continue to do spiritual reflection with ISP during pandemic lockdowns.

The impact ISP programs have on participants is evident in the fact that many come back to volunteer, often by being a witness and sharing their story at a retreat. Leslie is just one of the many former ISP participants who is now a volunteer. “ISP has helped me grow as a person. In the midst of my own pain, I’ve found that I’m still valuable and have something to offer of myself through volunteering.”



*Ivette Valenzuela, ISP regional director for the West*

There’s also a formal program, Ambassadors of Hope, in which a pair trains as a team in a two-year formation program to become ISP program leaders. Usually, at least one person on the team is a former ISP retreat participant, and sometimes both are former participants.

“Former participants have so much wisdom in their lived experiences; the perspective they share is a message of healing. These success stories of ISP are the backbone of what we do: They’re a reminder of hope for everyone who comes into ISP,” says Ms. Valenzuela.



*A quiet moment of prayer during an ISP retreat*

### ISP in the West

Currently, the ISP West region is focused on increasing the number of volunteers and strengthening relationships with the local community after the pandemic. The program relies on volunteers to run the retreats and on shelters to help find participants and host spiritual reflections.

Ms. Valenzuela is also working on elevating ISP’s profile by creating networks with local faith communities, including parishes and Catholic Charities. She’s also leveraging the Jesuit network in the region.

The first ISP affiliate in the West began in Orange County in 2014 in collaboration with the Loyola Institute for Spirituality in Orange, California. The Jesuits in Orange County, including Father Allan Deck, SJ, founder of the institute, “were the pioneers who paved the way for a lot of the spiritual programs there,” says Ms. Valenzuela.

She is also in conversation to find ways to collaborate with Loyola Marymount University; St. Ignatius and St. Agnes, the Jesuit parishes in San Francisco; and the Ignatian Volunteer Corps in San Diego.

### Ignatian Spirituality for All

As ISP celebrates 25 years, Ms. Valenzuela is looking to the future. One of her priorities for the next five years is to increase ISP’s visibility and make more people aware of it. “We’re looking to build a movement, and we’re also supporting two of the Society of Jesus’ Universal Apostolic Preferences: walking with the excluded and showing the way to God.”

“Spiritual direction, Ignatian spirituality and courses for formation are often available for those who are in parishes and work in ministry, but our brothers and sisters who are

*continued on page 19*



Jesuit poets enjoy time together in the chapel at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center.

## SACRED LINES: SEEKING TRANSCENDENCE WITH JESUIT POETS

By William Bole

Some years ago, a priest-poet named James S. Torrens rode into the forest surrounding Lake Pend Oreille in Idaho, gazing at the tall, native trees in that majestic stretch of the northern Rocky Mountains. Father Torrens, a Jesuit who grew up in the urban habitat of San Francisco around the middle of the past century, had just read *The Hidden Life of Trees*, about how trees take nourishment and even, in a sense, commune with each other. The book, by German forester Peter Wohlleben, opened the priest's eyes to the mysteries of red cedar, Douglas fir, ponderosa pine and other trees of the region. Afterward, he rendered his feelings in verse.

*A city boy in the North Woods,  
treading through pine and fir,  
enters the Great Silence  
of these monklike trees  
who talk by the tips of roots.  
What a commune the woods are!*

*He looks at a toppled trunk  
exposing those balled roots  
that shoot water up to the crown.*

*City boy has a world to learn  
Where all transpires slowly.  
Can he hear the trees breathe?*



Jesuits are known for seeking to “find God in all things,” as in the mountain hemlock trees of those northern woods. Put another way, these practitioners of Ignatian spirituality look for moments of

transcendence that the best poetry illuminates. They look for the poetic beauty of God's world and human striving. Jesuits will often do so as professors, witnessing an intellectual transformation on the part of a student; as pastors and spiritual directors, helping others to grasp how God is acting in their lives; as social ministers, finding meaning in the struggles of the poor and marginalized. Or, in their own ways, as physicists, lawyers, doctors, administrators, and in many other assignments and apostolates.

And some will tease out the poetry in life as, well, poets. Consider Father Thomas Flowers, SJ, who, like Fr. Torrens, belongs to a small but eloquent band of Jesuits practicing this craft in the Jesuits West Province of the Society of Jesus.



Fr. Flowers began finding his groove as a poet a couple of decades ago when he was a freshman at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He was going through some things, as undergraduates often do. "I was feeling a sense of desolation," recalls the Jesuit, who was ordained in 2018. "I was really feeling like God can't solve my problem." That summer, he was back home, going to Mass at his family's parish in the Diocese of San José. One of the readings was from the Gospel of John, recounting a time when many of the original disciples were abandoning Jesus, who then turned to his inner circle of 12 and asked, "Do you also want to leave?" To which Simon Peter replied: "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

Reflecting on that biblical verse, the undergraduate was moved to create his own lines, overlaying his spiritual struggle with the Gospel story. In the poem, he speaks of his despair, which gives way to hope in the last stanzas.

*You asked me  
If that meant  
That I was leaving, too,  
That I wasn't so charmed by you  
Anymore.*

*And I didn't have to think  
Before I replied.*

*Where would I go,  
And what would I do,  
With my life  
If I weren't in love with you?*

*And I stayed for a while.*



That poem, titled "Left," appears in Fr. Flowers's first collection of poems, *Walking Humbly: Scripture Meditations in Verse*, published by Paulist Press in 2007 (the year he entered the Jesuit order). Two years later, Paulist released his second collection, *God's Invitation: Meditations on Covenant Relationship*. The priest is now a professional historian, awaiting publication of his third book, based on his doctoral dissertation about St. Peter Canisius; he is beginning



Fr. Bill Rewak, SJ, working on a composition in his room at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California

a new assignment in St. Louis, teaching Church history to Jesuits early in their priestly formation.

Still, Fr. Flowers makes time to write a poem just about every week, and occasionally writes poems to encourage a friend or family member or to mark milestones like the birth of a niece or nephew. Though his craft has developed since his college days, he continues to explore biblical themes and sources of spiritual uplift. "I'm almost always writing about hope. Nearly all my poems end in hope—the bleaker the beginning of a poem, the more likely I am to turn the poem to the light of hope," he says. "I want God to feel close as people finish one of my poems."



Fr. Jim Torrens, SJ, Fr. Thomas Flowers, SJ, and Fr. Bill Rewak, SJ, on the grounds of Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California

Father William J. Rewak, SJ, began writing poems not as a college student but as a college president. In 1976, he was in his first year serving as president of Santa Clara University, looking for some sort of diversion from the presidential grind. He decided to try his hand at poetry, and eventually gathered up his many poems in three independently published collections, *The Right Taxi*, *Heartbeat* and *The Orphan Bear*. In those books, Fr. Rewak aims to turn a light on the transcendent reality that

*continued on next page*

## Sacred Lines *continues*

suffuses our lives. The Jesuit says he hopes readers leave his poems with “the idea or feeling that there is a reality beyond what they can see with physical eyes.” He believes that most poetry, secular or religious, does that.

The title poem of *The Right Taxi* ultimately arrives at this reality through the language of grace. In the early lines, he introduces the imagery of a taxi, suggesting something less than a sure path to transcendence.

*Outside, rain slanted  
and taxis looked for home;  
the day kept its grimness  
in a tight fist and waited,  
silently, for my exit.*



In the last lines, Fr. Rewak speaks of poetry and grace in the same breath,

leaving this reader with a sense that the experience of transcendence involves being ready at any moment for the sudden outbreak of human verse and divine mercy. Both come to those who wait with an open heart; both help bring us to the taxi that goes in the right direction, into the realm of grace.

*Poetry is like grace; it's there  
without petition, but you still  
must ask,  
You must ride the right taxi.  
So I stood on the corner,  
with rain slanting  
to see my face, and put out  
my hand.*



Like his fellow Jesuit poets, Father Jerry Graham, SJ, is exploring deep feelings and sublime themes, but he is playing a longer game—literally.

He is writing epic poetry, and in particular, a lengthy, narrative poem in response to the 34 cantos of Dante's *Inferno*, which takes the reader on a quest through the circles of hell, up toward heaven.

Fr. Graham became a Jesuit at age 38, three years after converting to Catholicism from evangelical Protestantism. He has served mostly in parishes and pastoral ministry, including a stint as chaplain for Gonzaga University's study abroad program in Florence, Italy. That is, notably, where Dante was born and raised. “I walked some streets that Dante would have walked and wondered what Dante would write about hell today,” he recalls. Fr. Graham is in the third year of a five-year assignment from his superiors to create the response poems, a few of which he shared for the purposes of this article. His opening response is titled, appropriately, “A Jesuit in Florence,”







Fr. Jerry Graham, SJ, writes poetry at a Portland, Oregon, coffee shop.

and after leading the reader on a walking tour of Florence, he begins taking up the hell question with his interlocutor, Dante.

*Old Guide, Hell has holes that open in history,*

*So Hell is opening its hole in me on its own.*

*Then let us walk past worn-down surfaces of walls,  
To pass that statue with stories poets fear most:*

*Its bronze snout still snarls wild-boar stories,*

*Of Hell's impervious, hardened, and empty insides.*

*Watch out! Your head's attention is not on new holes*

*Opened up in piazza puzzle pieces of stone.*

*I've learned to lean away from ledges and edges.*



At 72, Fr. Graham says he's not sure he'll live to finish responses to all 34 cantos in *The Inferno*; he has completed seven, which would fill a small poetry book. He continues to devote his days to the project, starting off early in the morning with

long walks in Portland and hours of writing in random coffee shops.

Jesuit poets like Fathers Graham, Rewak, Flowers and Torrens want to illuminate the divine presence in our world, but that doesn't mean they read or recommend just religious poets. They do walk in the giant footsteps of Gerard Manley Hopkins, one of the greatest poets of the Victorian era who happened to be a Jesuit. But they also invoke the classic or schoolroom poets, like Dickinson, Whitman and Poe—and much lesser-known contemporary secular poets. In Fr. Rewak's view, all poetry "exposes the divine life in all creation. That's what artists do. They look at the creation they see. Even atheists do that." Likewise, Fr. Flowers makes the point that there's "nothing profane" about secular poetry, which is what he mostly reads. "I think poetry encourages us to be attentive to words and sounds and lots of other things," he explains. "That's good practice for discerning God's presence as well."

Fr. Torrens was attentive to the early morning sounds of his predominantly Latino neighborhood in Fresno during

the 2010s, when he and fellow Jesuits would trudge a mile or so from their residence to a retirement home for the Sisters of Nazareth where they celebrated daily Mass. A former poetry editor for *America* magazine whose books include the essay-and-poem collection *Reaching for God* (Sheed and Ward), Fr. Torrens paid attention as well to the sights—the rows of one-story, flat-roofed houses. What would work his religious imagination the most, however, was the crowing of roosters in backyards. "I loved to hear them," says the priest, fondly recalling his time in Mexico City when he taught at Jesuit schools and strolled past similar houses with backyard roosters. (He also taught poetry at Santa Clara during the 1970s and '80s.)

Fr. Torrens, who now lives at the Sacred Heart Jesuit Center retirement home in Los Gatos, California (as does Fr. Rewak), decided to write a poem titled "Tell the World." In it, the Jesuit bridges his everyday experience in Fresno with the rich biblical symbolism of roosters—symbols of repentance, renewal and resurrection. ■

*In the small hours do not do the rooster in when you hear from his gravelly throat the instigation.*

*He brings the country in to the unsleeping city whose night owls and shift workers recoil from early noise.*

*For he is driven to broadcast early and late not exclusively to his minions the Easter alert, "Awake!"*





Ruthie Blacksea surrounded by her novitiate family after last August's first vows liturgy at Sacred Heart Chapel on the campus of Loyola Marymount University

## LIVING IN GRATITUDE

By Tracey Primrose

Hospitality has always been an important part of Jesuit life. There is something sacred about welcoming another person into your home, providing him or her with a meal and a place to rest. It is a gift both given and received, and in the Jesuits West Province, one of the prime practitioners of Jesuit hospitality is a lay woman named Ruthie Blacksea.

For nearly a decade, Ruthie has served as the kitchen manager of the Jesuit Novitiate of the Three Companions in Culver City, California. Equal parts chief cook and bottle washer and den mother, Ruthie holds an initiation meeting every August for the new novices. She shows the guys where everything goes and rattles off the basics: "Don't comingle the condiments by putting a knife with mustard on it in the mayonnaise jar. Let me know if we're running low on anything." And the cardinal rule: "Clean up after yourselves — I am not your mom."

Ruthie may tell the novices that she is not their mom, but as the fifth oldest of Virginia and Earl Breault's 12 children, she earned her maternal stripes early. She grew up outside Sacramento where her extended family included dozens of aunts, uncles and cousins and a rotating cast of Jesuits. Her uncle, Father Bill Breault, SJ, was a longtime teacher at nearby Jesuit High, and Jesuits were always part of the happy chaos at the Breault home. In 1971 at the age of 20, the oldest of the Breault children, Michael, became a Jesuit; he now serves as the social media manager for the Jesuits West Province.

For Ruthie, food has always been the tie that binds. While she learned to cook in her mother's kitchen, her culinary skills were sharpened by her college boyfriend's Lebanese grandmother. "She didn't speak a lick of English," Ruthie recalls. "But Mama was tiny and ferocious, and every time I did something wrong, she would smack me. But boy did I learn to make a delicious leg of lamb and the most perfect mint sauce."

Ruthie started doing a little catering on the side and then found a job with a mortgage company. When Amos Blacksea, one of the brokers from the San Francisco



Br. Michael Breault, SJ, and his sister Ruthie



office, came to Sacramento, he started inquiring about the pretty administrative assistant in the loans department. A year later, Ruthie and Amos were married. Gracie was born in 1987, and Sam followed in 1991.

The young family moved from the Bay Area to Sacramento so they could afford to buy a house, but there were other inducements. "Amos wouldn't even come home from work," Ruthie recalls. "He would go straight to my parents' house where he and my dad would drink beers and tinker with his motorcycle."



*The Jesuits at the novitiate came together last year to bless Ruthie's new car.*

On July 28, 1995, Ruthie was cooking up a storm for Gracie's swim tournament, while Amos was driving to Marin to pick up his older son, Evan, for a visit to Sacramento. When Evan called to say that his dad was hours late picking him up, Ruthie knew something was terribly wrong. She started calling the police and local hospitals for hours until two strangers arrived on her doorstep and asked if she had clergy nearby. "I start screaming and wailing. I'm banging on the garage door so hard and yelling. I remember it like it was yesterday." A long-haul truck driver, who had been at the wheel for 19 hours, veered across two-lane Highway 37, crashing horrifically into Amos' vintage convertible. The beloved husband and father died instantly.

Back home in Sacramento, word spread quickly and before long there were 30 family members gathered on the Blacksea's front lawn, holding hands and praying. Ruthie, "walking in a trance," had no choice but to pick up the pieces for the sake of her two young children. The next day she sat in the bleachers at 8-year-old Gracie's swim meet and watched her daughter, a middling swimmer "kill it" in the 25-meter backstroke. Gracie reported later, "I was laying on my back and looking straight up at dad the whole time. He just kept encouraging me."

In the years that followed, Ruthie and the children faced their heartbreak head on. Each saw a therapist, and Ruthie began to practice yoga, which she taught for years in the Sacramento area. She also cooked. Constantly. She could not make her family whole again, but she could make sure that her Gracie and Sam always had delicious and nutritious meals.

In 2014, Father Eddie Siebert, SJ, an old friend who was then serving on the staff of the novitiate in Culver City, called Ruthie and asked if she might consider moving to Los Angeles to be the kitchen manager at the novitiate. The kids now grown, she leapt at the chance, even renting an apartment directly across the street from the novitiate.

In addition to managing the kitchen, Ruthie is responsible for stocking everything — from toothpaste to paper towels — that is used in the house. She goes grocery shopping daily and prepares dinner four nights a week. Everything is homemade. She has binders full of recipes in the kitchen but admits that most of what she prepares is impromptu. Some days she just wakes up and thinks, "It feels like a curry day."



*Ruthie and her husband, Amos Blacksea*

Just like her mom of 12, Ruthie is a bargain shopper. When one of the novices asked if she could make oysters, she shot him a look that said: Don't ask again. There is laughter and love in her kitchen, and she says that she feels a great sense of pride when she sees the guys' faces as they file in for dinner. Cooking for them makes her feel valued and reminds her of all the meals she prepared for her own children.

In 2016, Ruthie's adored younger sister, Claire, died of cancer at the age of 52. Ruthie spent months by Claire's side, encouraged by the novitiate's former long-serving

*continued next page*



*Ruthie and her children, Gracie and Sam*

director, Father Steve Corder, SJ, who told her that there was only one place that she needed to be. Less than a year after Claire's death, Ruthie was working at the novitiate one day when she received the call that is every parent's worst nightmare. Her son, Sam, who had struggled with addiction but had been sober for 18 months, had been found dead at the age of 26. When Ruthie learned about Amos' sudden death, she was surrounded by the Breault family. When her heart was torn in two for the second time, her novitiate family held her close.

"I understood what true community life was about that day," she recalls. "Not like a friend, not like a family member, these were religious people living in a community who were kind, open and generous and truly inhabited love in its purest form, and they were absolutely there for me."

The day after Sam died, Ruthie received a call from Father Tony Harris, SJ, who worked at the novitiate, asking her to come over. Although they hadn't slept all night, Ruthie, Gracie and a long line of Breault family members walked across the street and met Fr. Tony in the novitiate's chapel. He had put a single line of chairs facing the chair where he was seated, and he proceeded to lead the family in "the most beautiful, unscripted, moving prayer service I have ever experienced."

That weekend, the novitiate was hosting an outside retreat group, and Ruthie had been tapped to prepare all the meals for the gathering. In typical Ruthie fashion, the minute Fr. Tony's impromptu chapel service was over, she marched her family into the novitiate kitchen so that, tears

notwithstanding, they could help her dice and chop the salad she had planned for lunch.

For the first couple of months after Sam's death, Gracie never left her mother's side, but one day Ruthie decided she had to show people that "life goes on." She shoed her daughter out and found a grief group, which has helped her bear unimaginable pain while learning that "you can smile again, you can live again."

These days, Ruthie is all smiles for the two men in her life: Sam's 7-year-old son, Micky; and Gracie's new baby, Hunter Samuel. Sam appears frequently in Ruthie's dreams. "In my most recent dream, I am standing with a group of people when Sam pulls up in his car. I rush over to the car, and Sam bounds out and picks me up and my feet are not touching the ground because he's so tall. And he starts twirling me in circles, and my head is in his hair. And he's saying, 'I love you so much. I love you so much.' And he's just spinning me, spinning me, spinning me. And I can feel his arms around me. I can feel his breath. I can feel everything. He's just constantly around me."

"You know, I just thank Sam all the time for everything, for my dream the other night, for me getting to be his mama."

Despite all she has lost, Ruthie Blacksea has nothing but gratitude – for her family, for her husband and son, now in God's care, and for the job which gives her life purpose and joy. "If I don't live in gratitude, I can't live in the moment." ■



*Ruthie with grandsons, Micky and Hunter*



---

## Ignatian Spirituality Project *continues*



*An ISP retreat for men in Orange County, California*

unsheltered, they might not even think about it—it might seem beyond their reach or they don't even know about Ignatian spirituality—so it's a great gift to provide that opportunity for them to experience Ignatian spirituality."

ISP provides a sacred space to accompany each other in the challenges of life and puts everyone at the same level, Ms. Valenzuela says. "It is giving the gift of Ignatian

spirituality to all people, from different walks of life and faith traditions."

"ISP has helped me to understand that we are all experiencing life," says Leslie. "There are people dealing with health issues, marital problems, overcoming substance abuse, you name it. But we are not alone in our walk and ISP shows us this."

"My life when I first learned about ISP was so fear-based," says Leslie, who now works in healthcare and lives with her daughter in San Diego. "I worried constantly and doubted where I stood with God. I was angry with him but really afraid to acknowledge that anger. I would love to say that my life has been a fairy tale since getting involved with ISP, but it hasn't. However, I can say that my problems are not all consuming, and I am aware that this too shall pass. I have a beautiful support system with my ISP team members. I have their encouragement and prayers and an unshakeable hope for a better tomorrow. ISP has taught me to hope and to find that peace—that surpasses all understanding—in God's presence." ■

---

## New School Offers Hope to Seattle Students *continues*

"Archbishop Paul Etienne discerned that this was the right time for our school to come to life," said Mr. Orem. "He recognized that Seattle, despite its wealth, also has tremendous poverty. There are 17,000 high school students south of Seattle who qualify for free or reduced lunch. The need for this school is off the charts."

Support from the Jesuits West Province also proved essential. "From the start, the past and current provincials and their teams have been fully engaged and supportive of this new school," said Mr. Orem. "They were our constant companions and made this a Jesuit-infused work from the beginning."

The final piece of the puzzle came together when the school's board hired Paul Hogan, who served as principal of Portland's Jesuit High School, where he had worked for 27 years, as the school's founding president. "Students today feel little agency or hope for themselves, especially coming out of the pandemic. We know they will find hope at Cristo Rey Jesuit Seattle."



*Paul Hogan, founding president, Cristo Rey Jesuit Seattle*

When Mr. Hogan first heard about this job, he knew that Cristo Rey Jesuit Seattle "is where I want to spend my last professional decade living out the Jesuit mission of offering a preferential option for the poor. The young people we will serve are at the center of our mission to preach Jesus's good news to those at the margins of society. We'll work to ensure that we're offering both the Gospel message and practical skills, as Cristo Rey schools are where the Gospel meets the American dream, where lives are transformed." ■





## Spiritual Reflection

# CROOKED LINES

By Cyrus Habib, SJ

The story of my vocation thus far is best summed up in the proverb, often attributed to St. Teresa of Avila, “God writes straight with crooked lines.” Those words were certainly on my mind as I paced nervously around the faculty lounge at Seattle Prep one Sunday afternoon in the spring of 2022, waiting impatiently, along with a couple dozen students, teachers and parents, for the results of the Washington State Mock Trial Championship. The nervousness I felt in the pit of my stomach was oddly reminiscent of those harrowing nights in 2012, 2014 and 2016 spent awaiting the outcome of my campaigns for elected office. And yet, there was a crucial difference; this time it wasn’t all about me or my success. While it’s true that I had spent the past two months helping coach those talented students, the outcome of the tournament bore no consequences for me personally. And so, imagine my surprise when I found myself every bit as joyful when the judges announced that Prep had won the state championship and was headed to nationals as I had when I won those elections.

That moment, along with at least a dozen others I experienced during my semester teaching at Seattle Prep as a Jesuit novice, left me marveling at the countless hidden ways in which God had been laying the foundation for my religious vocation for years. Put differently, I found myself astounded at how this vocation was inviting me to draw on the reservoir of my past experiences for the greater glory of God. I found myself back in Seattle for the first time since 2020, but no longer as Washington state’s lieutenant governor, nor as a legislator, practicing lawyer or law professor. Instead, I was spending January through May as a novice on assignment at Prep, team-teaching five classes, ranging from sophomore theology to AP literature, supporting campus ministry activities, and helping coach the school’s storied mock trial team. God indeed writes straight on crooked lines!

The graces came early and often at Seattle Prep. On my second day, Maia, a girl in my AP literature class, came up to me at the end of the period and asked, “Mr. Habib, I’m also heading to mock trial practice. Can I walk with you and show you the way?” Far from being intimidated by a blind former politician with a clerical collar, she exuded nothing but warmth and a readiness to help. I found my interactions with Maia and the other students who would approach and offer to orient me during those early days on campus to be very edifying; I overcame my instinctive aversion to appearing weak or helpless and allowed myself to be





With members of the Mock Trial Team and their faculty coaches, Jennifer Freeman and Andy McCarthy

led. This, in turn, gave me additional opportunities to get to know students one-on-one. I sensed, even then, that my willingness to show vulnerability opened new channels of communication with students who might otherwise have seen me as inaccessible or unrelatable. Some of my best moments of ministry came about when I allowed others to minister to me.

My life prior to the Society had afforded me a myriad of extraordinary professional experiences, from debating legislation on the floor of the state Senate and, later, presiding over that chamber and serving as the state's acting governor for a cumulative six months. But I can honestly say that teaching literature to high schoolers was more purely fun than any of those experiences. My teaching partner, who had taught AP literature at Prep for years, was incredibly generous in allowing me to split the instruction time equally with him and even design my own lesson plans. We read Dickens's *Great Expectations*, Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, and Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, and I loved every moment of it.

After studying comparative literature as an undergraduate, I'd gone on to

obtain a Master of Letters in English, a degree I thought would never prove professionally useful. But, as I taught those seniors about the Great Migration of African Americans to the industrialized North, I found myself drawing upon the graduate research I had done on Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. Students discussed issues of race and gender with a nuance and sensitivity that I found uplifting. They transcended the all-too-facile stereotypes held by my generation about theirs, which would label them as either woke snowflakes or entitled prep school elite. This maturity also meant that, despite their secularized sensibilities, I found it surprisingly easy to incorporate the Jesuit spirituality I had been learning as a novice into our classroom

discussions, as when the students applied the Ignatian concept of desolation to Shakespeare's villain Don John.

Then there was my time helping with the mock trial team. I hadn't practiced law in nearly a decade, and I could tell from the first after-school practice session I attended, in which I was summarily schooled by a sophomore, that my hazy recollection of the rules of evidence would simply not suffice if I had any hope of contributing meaningfully as a coach. So, for the first time since taking the bar exam in 2009, I delved into the minutia of hearsay exceptions and relevance objections.

I knew the program by reputation, so I was unsurprised at how talented the students proved to be, and it was a delight to accompany them in the lead-up to the state tournament and, eventually, nationals. For example, I cherish the opportunity to draw on my years of experience with public speaking to help prepare the student lawyers to deliver opening statements and closing arguments. But the most meaningful grace that came from my work with the mock trial team was the quality time I spent with students outside the traditional classroom dynamic. We rehearsed together, strategized together, stressed together, rejoiced together and grieved together.

*continued on page 25*



Vow day, August 13, 2022, with novitiate classmate, J.P. Sacedor, SJ

# THE BROTHERS PRIVETT

By Tracey Primrose



*Steve and John Privett in an undated photo*

Last fall, I contacted Jesuits West's archivist, Brother Dan Peterson, SJ, as I do every time I want an artifact from our province collection. In this case, I was looking for the prayer card for Jesuit Fathers John and Steve Privett, who were celebrating the 50th anniversary of their June 23, 1972, ordination. Br. Dan did not have the card, but he offered a photo "of the two brothers recently arrived in San Francisco after crossing the country by wagon train shortly after the Civil War."

In examining the image, I could not tell whether the Privetts had served at the Battle of Bull Run or were part of Butch Cassidy's Hole in the Wall

Gang, but I wanted to know more. So, I called Fr. John Privett and learned the answer: The decades-old photo was taken at a long-shuttered shopping mall as a Christmas present for their parents. They just wanted to give Mom and Dad a laugh. Turns out the brothers like to laugh a lot.

Fr. John Privett, two years his brother's senior, is an extrovert. So is Fr. Steve Privett. They met the Jesuits as students at Loyola High School in Los Angeles where John was an "all-American guy with

the right haircut, the right clothes, the right Letterman sweater. I was your basic 1950s kid, and some people even called me 'Harry High School.'"

He is not humblebragging when he tells me that he played football for three years, and the Loyola High Cubs never won a game. "We were forever saying the rosary and praying to our Lady of Victory," he recalls. "Whenever the opposition would get on our one-yard line, we could call time out and say a Hail Mary. On the next play, they would crush us."

Any disappointment on the field was eased by the admiration he felt for the young Jesuit scholastics who

were teaching at Loyola High as part of their Jesuit formation. "I found the scholastics to be just wonderful. They were alive, vibrant and energetic, and I wanted to be like them."

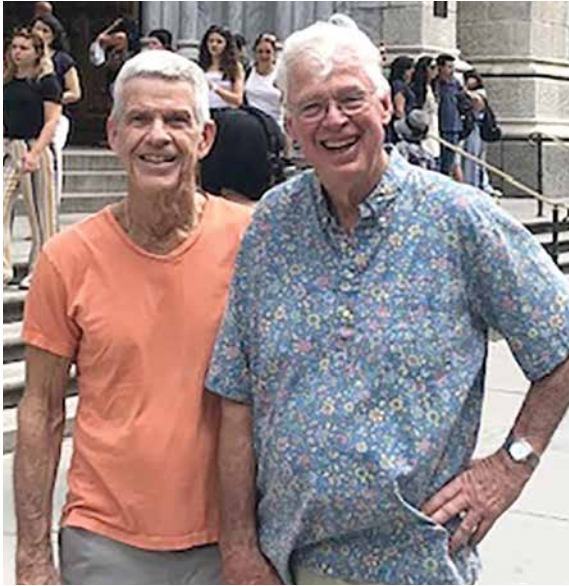
When he told his parents that he wanted to become a Jesuit, Peg and Jack Privett were supportive, but his dad put the key to the family home in his son's hand and said, "If things go south, don't hesitate to come back." John entered the Jesuit novitiate in Los Gatos just two months after his 1958 high school graduation. "I was an immature 18-year-old. I don't recommend it."

Steve, who served in student government and as editor of the Loyalist newspaper, did not share his brother's fondness for the Gridiron, but they had the same affection for the scholastics. "They were smart, and they cared about us. Plus, it was a completely different time, they were headed for priesthood, and being a priest was a big deal."

When Steve told his dad that he was also becoming a Jesuit, his father asked if he could break the news to Mom. The Privetts had no other children, and Steve's decision meant there would be no grandchildren. But Steve recalls with gratitude that, "neither one of them would ever get in the way of what we wanted to do."

The novitiate at that time was, according to Steve, "a humane prison." The brothers could meet once a month for two hours, but otherwise could not communicate. John completed his time in Los Gatos first, and Steve followed two years later. Eventually the brothers found themselves standing shoulder





*Frs. Steve and John Privett, SJ*

to shoulder on the altar at Blessed Sacrament Church in Hollywood, California, as they received the sacrament of holy orders.

Following ordination, John went to San Francisco State University for a master's degree in communications, while Steve served as the province's assistant director of novices and in leadership positions at Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose.

Steve then headed to Catholic University in Washington, D.C., for a Ph.D. in religious studies. During a summer break, he studied Spanish in Bolivia, but it was a stop in El Salvador that proved to be a "life-changing moment." The country was engaged in a bloody civil war, where the government-run military targeted anyone suspected of supporting reform. "I saw the bodies that were dropped by the death squads. That time in El Salvador changed everything—how I teach, what I teach, the way I view the world."

A newly minted Ph.D., he took a position at Santa Clara University. And here the story of the two

brothers dovetails, because at the very same moment that Fr. Steve Privett was teaching theology, Fr. John Privett was teaching communications at Santa Clara. John spent two decades at Santa Clara, eventually becoming rector of the Jesuit community. He loved every minute of his time there and particularly his friendships with the faculty. The faculty selected John for dual honors: president of the Faculty Club and "Worst Dressed Faculty Member." The guy once known as "Harry High School" had

taken to sporting his dad's wrinkled and fraying Brooks Brothers button downs. He looked, John says, like "an unmade bed."

After his time at Santa Clara, John was named provincial of the former

California Province Jesuits and then served as rector of the Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Meanwhile, Steve was tapped to serve as Santa Clara's vice president for academic affairs and, later, provost. In 2000, he became the 27th president of the University of San Francisco (USF). Under his leadership, USF developed new and innovative academic programs, improved campus facilities and established a downtown campus. Of his 18-year tenure (14 years as president and four years as chancellor), Steve says, "So many faculty and staff members shared my vision that USF would be a university that addressed social justice issues, something we were not hesitant to say publicly. That, for me, was one of the most rewarding parts of the job." When he stepped down in 2017, USF's Board of Trustees named Steve "president emeritus" in honor of his service.

*continued next page*



*Fr. John Privett, SJ, gives Communion to his father at the brothers' first Mass following their 1972 ordination. Fr. Steve Privett, SJ, is by his side.*



*The Privett family celebrating John's 50th birthday at the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego*

In 2018, Steve was asked to become the president of Verbum Dei High School, which provides career focused, college preparatory Catholic education to underserved students in South Los Angeles. He served for four years in that role and is now back, at 80, teaching theology at the place where his vocation began: Loyola High School. By bringing justice issues into the classroom, he wants his students to know that "the ultimate test of religion is not about how many rosaries you say but about how you live your life, how you care for other people."

John Privett's last job, the one that capped half a century of service, was as the superior of Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, the very place that once housed the novitiate where he and his brother walked through the door as teenagers. For 14 years, John cared for the more than 80 retired and infirm Jesuits who comprise the community. "I loved it. I like taking care of our guys, doing what I can to make their road a little less bumpy."

That road was more than bumpy. For a time, it was devastating, particularly in the early days of Covid when eight Sacred Heart Jesuits lost their lives

and dozens more were sick and hospitalized. "It was the most difficult thing I have done in ministry because people were dying all around us. We were living right in the eye of the storm."

John retired in 2021, but because Jesuits never truly retire, he and his fellow Jesuits at Sacred Heart Jesuit



Center have one final mission: to pray for the Church and the Society of Jesus, something he does faithfully every day. An avid reader, John also spends 20 minutes every day studying Chinese, a habit he picked up during the five years he lived in Taiwan during his Jesuit formation. He says he does it to "halt my mental degradation. Also, I love to impress people in Chinese restaurants. I can almost hear them say, 'Look at that fat white guy speaking Chinese.'"

He tends the roses in the gardens that surround the building that has been a part of his life for more than half a century. "It's a lovely old building, it's got lovely cracks and peeling paint, kind of like us. We're not new modern folks, we're old folks. I love the place. I love the grounds. I have a great affection for the men here."

Steve Privett is not one for gardening, but he loves being outdoors, particularly on the hour-long bike rides he takes to the beach. He also enjoys celebrating Mass in Spanish at St. Cecelia's, the parish where his mother was baptized. He says that last year's 50th jubilee caught him by surprise: "I've been at this longer than I thought."

In spending time with the Privetts, I was surprised by how different they are. At the same time, I noticed how deeply aligned they are about what matters most: their relationship with Christ; their love for the Society of Jesus; and their need to infuse humor in everything they do. Always irreverent and self-deprecating, the brothers still like to dress up for a gag. And when someone hands me a photo of the president emeritus of the University of San Francisco in the world's ugliest holiday sweater, there is no chance I won't run it. ■



---

## Crooked Lines *continues*

I was honored to write letters of recommendation for two of those students—one of them was Maia—and, a year later, I'm still in touch with three students from that varsity team. I can't imagine any political endorsement or public accolade that could compare with receiving the following from a student: "You have been the best teacher, mentor and friend I could ask for as my time at Prep comes to a close, and I wish you the very best at Loyola Chicago and beyond." There's one more tattoo on my heart!

There are so many graces from that semester at Seattle Prep that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. But more than anything, what I took

away from those exhilarating and exhausting months was a profound truth about mission: It can sanctify everything one brings to it. For me, these include, to name just a few, my literature studies, legal background, political experience, identity as a four-time cancer-surviving, fully blind Iranian American from a mixed religion, immigrant family, and now, my Jesuit training.

We sometimes feel ambivalent about certain facets of our lives, but apostolic service can help us to rediscover and even reclaim aspects of ourselves we thought useless or unlikable. In the three years since I became a Jesuit, I've often been floored by how providential it was that

I of all people was with a particular person at a particular place and time. There was the aging writer who was losing her eyesight, the 102-year-old Iranian woman who delighted in teaching me Persian poetry, and the unhoused man I met at the Catholic Worker House in Chicago who wanted to learn his legal rights.

From speaking with my brother Jesuits, I know these experiences aren't unique to me. God doesn't call just a part of us to mission; he calls us in our entirety and allows us to put our whole selves to the service of others *Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*, just as he did for me at Seattle Prep. Ultimately, it's this straight writing on crooked lines that fills me with awe. ■

---

## Donor Profile *continues*



Fr. Sean Carroll, SJ, with Nancy and Chuck Collins

He also served as the first non-dentist to be the chair of the insurance company, Delta Dental of Washington, and on the boards of numerous private sector corporations.

Of all those boards and commissions, he found most satisfying his work as the founding chair of the state's Higher Education Coordinating Committee, which resulted in five new university campuses in long-underserved cities.

"Then one night in 1995, my wife reminded me how much time I was spending away from home and how little time I had left with my daughters. One would soon graduate from college, and another was getting serious about her boyfriend. I realized she was right, and I had to transition from doing to being. Within the next two years, I retired from the Army, sold old companies and never accepted another public sector commission appointment.

Since that conversation, my life became centered around my relationships rather than my work."

Mr. Collins and his wife now spend time with their four grandchildren and among their three homes, including one in La Quinta, California, and another in Philipsburg, Montana, where he spent his early days as a child growing up on a cattle ranch.

"My retirement has been more than reading and relaxing." He adds, "I served on the usual business and nonprofit boards, and I have developed and advocated for alternative transportation systems. In the winter, I tutor young Latino students. Most volunteers steer away from 6th graders, but I love them. After 29 years of working with young men and women in the Army, I continue to find the young a pleasure to work with."

For his service, Mr. Collins has received numerous awards including an honorary doctorate from Gonzaga University in 1999.

He also encourages others to give generously to the Jesuits West Province and to organizations that matter to them. "Why do this? Just read the Gospels. Try Matthew 25. 'Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" ■

### JESUITS WEST CO-HOSTS PROPHETIC COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

By MegAnne Liebsch

*Community organizer* is a common job responsibility across the resumes of many Jesuits. But what is community organizing? And why is it an integral part of Jesuit formation and Catholic social teaching?

These are the questions that sparked the recent Prophetic Communities Conference at the University of San Francisco (USF). Co-sponsored by USF, Jesuits West, and the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center, the conference explored the discipline of community organizing as an expression of Catholic social thought.

Over three days of workshops and panels, 150 participants explored topics such as Organizing in Ministerial Formation, Organizing and Theology, Nonviolent Strategy, and Laudato Si' as an Organizing Project. At the center of the conference was a series of conversations designed to help participants discern the present realities and challenges facing the Catholic Church in the U.S. and how organizing can build a stronger future for the faith.

"Faith-based community organizing is something that has a long history in this country, and it's a big part of the Jesuit legacy," says Annie Fox, who helped plan the conference and serves as Jesuits West's provincial assistant for justice and ecology organizing. "While organizing has historically been a vital part of the Catholic social tradition, there is not much



*Panelists discuss why organizing is critical to living out faith.*

Catholic theological reflection on why this mode of justice work has been and continues to be important to the Church."

Many prominent social movements in the U.S. were led by Catholic and Christian communities: labor and union movements during the Industrial Revolution; the anti-war movement of the 1970s; and the farmworkers movement led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. Catholic leaders were involved in the initial founding of national organizing networks like Faith in Action, the Industrial Areas Foundation and the Gamaliel Network. Today, many Catholic bishops, Jesuits and other vowed religious and lay Catholics are at the frontlines of organizing efforts—from protecting voting rights to promoting environmental justice.

Despite this rich tradition, there are few spaces or resources dedicated to

understanding organizing through a Catholic theological lens, according to Ms. Fox. The Prophetic Communities Conference was the first of its kind, gathering organizers, theologians, lay people and vowed religious from across the U.S.

"The gathering reminded us that the Catholic social tradition is a living tradition, embodied and shaped by people who connect their faith to the struggle for justice," says conference planner Erin Brigham, executive director of the Joan and Ralph Lane Center for Catholic Social Thought at USF. "Too often, Catholic social thought (CST) is understood as a set of abstract principles. But the stories of communities organizing for social change gives meaning to solidarity and human dignity—the foundational commitments of CST."

More than a means to achieve policy reform or systemic change, organizing builds relationships. Both the conference planners and attendees agreed—this is spiritual work. In convening this diverse gathering, the planners hoped attendees would build deeper relationships with one another and come away nourished by these connections.

"The Catholic Church finds itself in a critical moment to rediscover the power of relationship as we embrace the call to synodality under Pope Francis," says Ms. Brigham. "Many Catholics in North America don't know how to practice this way of being Church. Organizers have a lot to teach us about how to discern where the Spirit is moving us as a community."



*Conference participants gather for a liturgy honoring the martyrs of El Salvador and their commitment to justice.*



## FR. EDDIE SIEBERT, S.J. PRODUCES "THE POPE'S EXORCIST"

By Becky Sindelar



"The buddy-priest action-comedy-horror hybrid we didn't know we wanted has finally landed." That's what The New York Times said about "The Pope's Exorcist," a film released in April 2023, for which Father Eddie Siebert, SJ, served as an executive producer.

The film stars Russell Crowe and was inspired by the life and ministry of the late Pauline Father Gabriele Amorth, a longtime and well-known exorcist for the Diocese of Rome. Known as "the James Bond of exorcists," Fr. Amorth, who chronicled his work in two memoirs, performed tens of thousands of exorcisms until his death in 2016 at age 91.

Born in Modena, Italy, in 1925, Fr. Amorth served with the Italian resistance during World War II, earned a law degree and worked as a journalist before being ordained a priest of the Society of St. Paul in 1954. Appointed chief exorcist of the Diocese of Rome, he founded the International Association of Exorcists and served as its president until retiring in 2000.

Although Hollywood had been after the movie rights to Fr. Amorth's story, in the end, it was a small, Jesuit-run, production company that ultimately prevailed.

Fr. Siebert, who founded Loyola Productions in 2000, says that while he had no interest in making an exorcism movie, he found Fr. Amorth's books to tell a compelling story of good and evil.

The Society of St. Paul (Paulines) in Rome owned the rights to Fr. Amorth's story,

and although they had refused many other offers, they were intrigued when a faith-based production company came calling. But getting them to agree was only half the battle.

"In 2018, when the Paulines finally said yes, I had to hire a lawyer here in LA and a second one in Milan to negotiate the contracts before hopping on a last-minute flight to Milan to meet the fathers. We are a nonprofit, not a well-capitalized production company, and I was just watching the dollars add up."

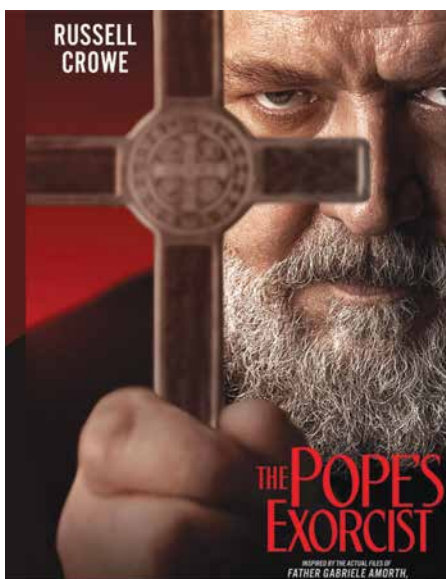
While negotiating with the Paulines, Fr. Siebert and his colleague, Michael Kaczmarek, were simultaneously

shopping the project with Hollywood studios before eventually getting the green light from Sony Pictures' Screen Gems. Then, as so often happens in Tinseltown, the project stalled for two years. Fr. Siebert wondered if he would ever recoup the money he invested when, out of the blue, an executive shuffle at Sony meant that the once-dead movie would live to see another day.

That is when the fun began. With Sony now paying the bills, Fr. Siebert could enjoy the many creative aspects of moviemaking. From helping to select the scriptwriter, director, cast and locations, he had input on every aspect of the production.

Last summer, Fr. Siebert was on set when principal photography began in Rome, but he stayed home in LA while the film was in postproduction in Australia. When he is not making what the New York Times called a "head-spinning genre mash-up" of a movie, Fr. Siebert has two very busy day jobs: He is the rector of the Jesuit community at Loyola Marymount University and a professor at LMU's School of Film and Television.

"This was a great opportunity for me to work with a group of pros. The movie wasn't so much about raising the bar on horror films as it was about showing a priest who talks about what's important — reconciliation, prayer and God's love. And the fact that he also gets to annihilate a few demons, that just makes it more fun."



## RAYMOND PARCON, SJ, ORDAINED A DEACON



Reverend Ivan Camilleri, Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto. Deacon Parcon is currently

On May 13, 2023, Raymond Parcon, SJ, of Jesuits West, was ordained a deacon at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Toronto by Most

studying theology at Regis College at the University of Toronto.

Prior to entering the Society, he earned a bachelor's in mechanical engineering and a master's in software engineering, taught catechism classes to eighth grade students, and fed the homeless at Christ Cathedral in Orange, California. After joining the Jesuits in 2015, he completed first studies at Loyola University Chicago and was a chaplain at San Quentin Prison in California.

## APPOINTMENTS



**Father Agbonkhe E. Orobator, SJ,** a Jesuit theologian, speaker and leader, will become the new dean of the Jesuit School

of Theology of Santa Clara University (JST-SCU) on August 15, 2023. He takes over the deanship following the passing of former dean Fr. Joseph Mueller, SJ, in January 2023.

Fr. Orobator is currently president of the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar, responsible for leading the inter-provincial mission of the Society of Jesus in the region. He is known for his scholarship and talks on ecclesiology, theological ethics, human rights and human dignity, especially fuller participation of women in the life of the Church.

Fr. Orobator, who grew up in Benin City, Nigeria, joined the Jesuits in 1986 and was ordained in 1998. He is returning to JST-SCU as dean 25 years after completing his graduate studies there.



**Robert T. Jordan** became the new president of Seattle Preparatory School in February 2023. He previously served as an executive

consultant/chief of staff for national enterprise business services at Kaiser Permanente Health Plan and Hospitals in Oakland, California.

Mr. Jordan has extensive educational and leadership experience within the De La Salle Christian Brothers. He began his career as a religious studies teacher and director of campus ministry at De La Salle High School in Concord, California, before serving at the district (province) office. He then became president of Justin-Siena, a Christian Brothers-sponsored high school in Napa, California.



**Father Christopher Calderón, SJ,** has been named the next president of Cristo Rey High School Sacramento, effective

July 1, 2023. Fr. Calderón, who currently serves at the school as dean of students, has over 15 years of educational and leadership experience in Catholic high school education.

After earning a bachelor's in Latin studies from the University of San Francisco, he joined the Society of Jesus in 2006. During formation, he earned a Master of Divinity from the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry and a master's in education from Harvard University. He was ordained in 2017.



**Chris Alling** will become the 15th president of Jesuit High School in Sacramento on July 1, 2023, succeeding Fr. John P. McGarry, SJ.

Most recently, he served as president and principal of Xavier College Preparatory in Palm Desert, California, the first lay-built Jesuit-endorsed high school, which he helped found in 2005.

Mr. Alling has also served as a teacher, department chair and assistant principal at Brophy College Preparatory in Phoenix. He holds a master's degree from Arizona State University and a professional certificate from Loyola Marymount University's Center for Catholic Education Leadership.



**Kelly Goodsell** has been named the next president of Bellarmine Preparatory School in Tacoma, Washington. She currently

serves as the director of Bellarmine's Academic Center of Excellence, a role in which she created, executed and expanded a program offering pathways of scholarship and support to all students.

Ms. Goodsell earned a bachelor's in sociology from Pacific Lutheran University, a master's in education from the University of Oregon and a doctorate in educational leadership from Seattle University. She will implement a succession plan for the center and then become president in January 2024.



**Bob Ryan** will become president of Brophy College Preparatory in Phoenix on July 1, 2023. Mr. Ryan, who currently serves as principal, will

assume the role of president from Adria Renke, who has been president since 2016 and has served the school for 26 years.

Mr. Ryan has a bachelor's from the University of Notre Dame, a master's in education from Arizona State University and a master's in Catholic school leadership from the University of San Francisco. He joined the faculty in 2000 and has been principal since 2006.



When Bob Ryan becomes president, **Jim Bopp** will take over as principal at Brophy. He first served at Brophy from 2005 until 2016 as a physics

teacher, dean of students, and assistant principal for technology and instruction.

He then served as principal at Creighton Preparatory School in Omaha, Nebraska, before returning to Brophy in the fall of 2022 to serve as an assistant principal until he transitions to the role of principal on July 1, 2023. A Jesuit seminarian early in his career, his work is grounded in Ignatian spirituality and a commitment to the Jesuit mission.





**Paul Hogan** has been named founding president of Cristo Rey Jesuit Seattle (CRJS), which will welcome its first class of freshmen in

the 2024-25 school year. He joins Cristo Rey Jesuit from SetPath, a non-profit that provides free mentorship and life-planning services to young adults.

Prior to SetPath, Mr. Hogan spent 28 years at Jesuit High School in Portland, Oregon, including a decade as principal. He has also served as a trustee for organizations that serve young adults, including Edison High School, University of Oregon's Enrollment Advisory Board and the Children's Cancer Association.



**Emily Hagelgans** has been named the first principal of Cristo Rey Jesuit Seattle. She has been involved with Jesuit education since the age

of 14, when she entered Walsh Jesuit High School in Ohio. After earning her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Xavier University in Cincinnati, she began her career teaching science at the original Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago.

In 2017, Ms. Hagelgans moved to Portland, Oregon, where she served as dean and then vice principal for academics and student life at Jesuit High.



**Roderick D. "Rod" Jemison** will become the next principal at Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose, California, in July 2023.

He is the founding head of school of United World College ISAK Japan, where he currently serves as advisor.

He was the upper school director, upper school dean of students and teacher at La Jolla Country Day School in La Jolla, California. He has also taught at schools in Nashville and Japan. Mr. Jemison earned a bachelor's in English literature from Morehouse College and a master's in literature from Tennessee State University.



**Jamal K. Adams** has been named the next principal of Loyola High School of Los Angeles, starting in the role this summer. The former director of Loyola's

Department of Equity and Inclusion, he was also a Loyola faculty member and head basketball coach for 16 years.

Most recently, Mr. Adams served as the principal of LaSalle High School in Pasadena, California, since 2021. He is an alumnus of Loyola High and earned a bachelor's in economics from Columbia University and a master's in education from Loyola Marymount University.



**Derek Duchesne** has been named the next principal of Gonzaga Preparatory School in Spokane, Washington.

For the past 14 years, he has been the school's academic vice principal. Prior to that he served as dean of students.

Mr. Duchesne has also been a classroom teacher throughout his tenure, earning the Jesuit Secondary Education Association Educator of the Year for Gonzaga Prep in 2012. A Spokane native, he earned a bachelor's in chemistry and teaching at Washington State University and a master's in education and a principal certification from Eastern Washington University.



**Jesse Rodriguez Jr.** has been appointed the next principal of Verbum Dei Jesuit High School in Los Angeles. He has more than 20

years of experience in Catholic education and leadership, and he currently serves as the director of Loyola High School of Los Angeles' Center for Service and Justice while lecturing at Cal State Long Beach and Creighton University.

Mr. Rodriguez has also served as the vice principal of academic affairs at Saint John Bosco High School in Bellflower, California, and taught for many years in the classroom. He has a master's in theology from Loyola Marymount University and a master's and doctorate in education from California State University, Long Beach.

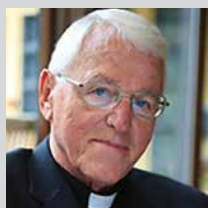


**Amanda Angaiak** is the new principal of Our Lady's School in San Diego. She previously served as director of

the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks and president of the Monroe Foundation, Inc. since 2019. Prior to that she was the PK-6 principal at the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks in Alaska for 17 years.

She also taught religion, coordinated student retreats and liturgies, conducted choir, and coached high school girls' basketball and softball. She received a bachelor's and a master's from the University of Notre Dame and was selected to the Alliance for Catholic Education Teaching Fellows, earning a master's in teaching at the University of Portland.

LORD,  
WE ENTRUST  
THOSE WHO  
HAVE DIED  
TO YOUR  
MERCY.  
WELCOME  
THEM  
INTO YOUR  
PRESENCE.



**Father Patrick B. O'Leary, SJ**

March 22, 1930  
January 5, 2023

Fr. Patrick B. O'Leary, SJ, a teacher and spiritual director, died on January 5, 2023, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California, at age 92. After graduating from Bellarmine Preparatory School in Tacoma, Washington, in 1948, he entered the Jesuit novitiate in Sheridan, Oregon, and was ordained in 1961. In 1963, Fr. O'Leary began a long association with Seattle University; he taught philosophy and theology (1963-1965, 1968-1970) and returned in 1992 as assistant to the president for Identity and Mission and chaplain for faculty, staff and alumni (2001-2016). A respected spiritual adviser, he was noted for his wise counsel and his "Ignatian Talks" on the life and spirituality of St. Ignatius. He also served as rector and theology professor at St. Michael's Institute on Gonzaga University's campus (1970-1976); as director of novices at the novitiate in Portland, Oregon (1976-1983); and as rector and theology professor at Gonzaga University (1986-1992). He did pastoral ministry in Spokane (2016-2021) before moving to Sacred Heart Jesuit Center for a ministry of prayer.



**Father Charles A. Welsh, SJ**

April 10, 1934  
January 26, 2023

Fr. Charles A. Welsh, SJ, a member of the China Province and formerly of the California Province, died in Taiwan on January 26, 2023, after a lifetime of service in Taiwan. He was 88 years old. After earning a degree from the University of California, Berkeley, he entered the Jesuit novitiate in Los Gatos, California, in 1959. Following studies at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, he went to Taiwan in 1965 to continue his studies in Chinese and theology. He was ordained a priest in 1972 in San Francisco and then returned to Taiwan, where he ministered for the rest of his life. Fluent in both Mandarin and Amoy Chinese, he worked at the Catholic Social Service Center in Hsinchu, including as director for many years. After earning a master's degree in psychology, he added counseling and guidance to his ministry. He served as superior at several Jesuit communities and held various province-level positions promoting the social work and professional standards of Jesuit ministries. He moved to the province infirmary in Xinzhuang in 2022 for a ministry of prayer.



**Brother Theodore C. Rohrer, SJ**

January 8, 1943  
March 7, 2023

Br. Theodore (Ted) C. Rohrer, SJ, died on March 7, 2023, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California. He was 80 years old and a Jesuit for 62 years. Br. Rohrer was born into a large farm family in Winton, California. After graduating from Our Lady of Mercy High School in Merced, California, he entered the Jesuit novitiate in Los Gatos in 1960. Br. Rohrer's lifelong ministry was in maintenance and groundskeeping. He was a mechanic, tractor driver, school bus driver and general fix-it man at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center (1963-1967, 1977-2013); the Jesuit Retreat Center of Los Altos in California (1967-1969); the Jesuit novitiate in Santa Barbara, California (1969-1973); and Brophy College Preparatory in Phoenix (1973-1977). From 2013 to 2015, he served at the Kino Border Initiative in Nogales, Arizona. He next assisted the superior at the Regis Community in Spokane from 2015 to 2018, capping his years of active ministry. Br. Rohrer then moved to Sacred Heart Jesuit Center to pray for the Church and the Society.



**Brother Michael J. Bennett, SJ**

April 6, 1934  
March 10, 2023

Br. Michael J. Bennett, SJ, died on March 10, 2023, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California, at age 88. After entering the Jesuit novitiate in Sheridan, Oregon, in 1957, he served as infirmarian at Sheridan (1961-1967) and as community administrator at Gonzaga Preparatory School in Spokane, Washington (1967-1969). He then joined the Oregon Province mission in Zambia, where he handled the finances at the Jesuit house (1967-1975) and served as bursar for the Zambia Bishops Conference (1976-1982), both in Lusaka. He returned to the U.S. in 1982 and served as an administrator at the novitiate. In 1985, he became financial manager of the Jesuit-run East Asian Pastoral Institute in the Philippines. He returned to Africa in 1989, working with the Jesuit Refugee Service in Nairobi, Kenya, and then back to Lusaka as administrator of the Jesuit community until 1994. He then did financial administration back in the Pacific Northwest. During his last years of active ministry, he was a pastoral minister to Native people in Washington state and Montana.



## From Our Archives

The feast of the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of the Lord, also known as the feast of Corpus Christi, has been celebrated since the Middle Ages. Typically held in June, the feast, which celebrates Christ's gift of the Eucharist, often involved a procession as pictured in this circa 1920s photo from Sacred Heart Mission in De Smet, Idaho.

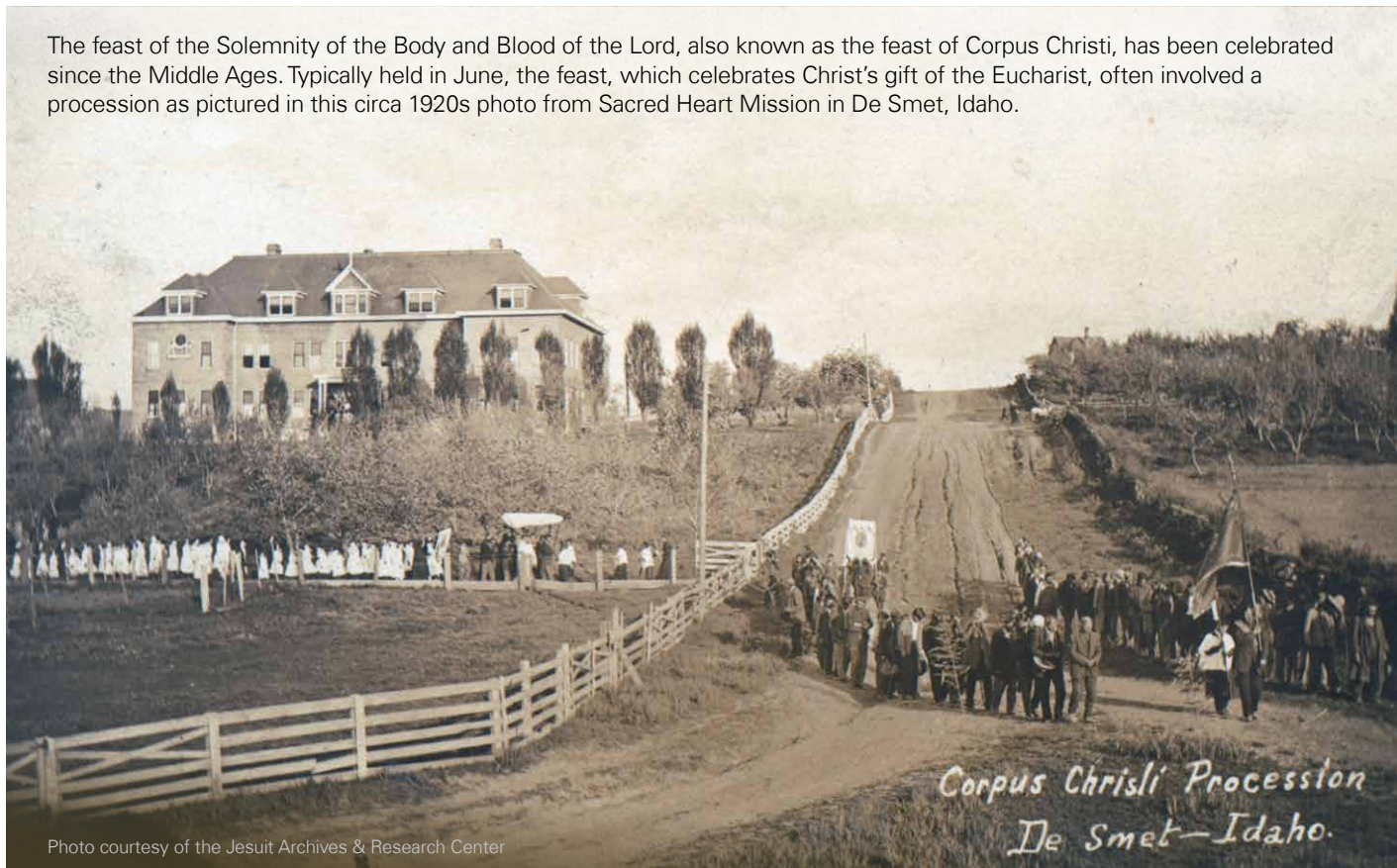


Photo courtesy of the Jesuit Archives & Research Center

## JESUITS HOLD CONGREGATION OF PROCURATORS IN LOYOLA, SPAIN



Fr. Victor Cancino, SJ

In May 2023, the Society of Jesus' 71st Congregation of Procurators met in Loyola, Spain, with more than 100 Jesuits from around the world taking part. An essential governing body of the Society, the assembly included one delegate from each of its provinces and regions, in addition to Father General Arturo Sosa, SJ, and his assistants.

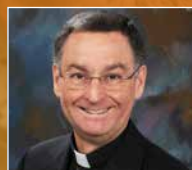
Fr. Sosa described the Congregation as "a unique opportunity to listen to the Spirit." He presented the *De Statu Societatis*—the state of the Society of Jesus—which procurators discussed during the gathering.

Fr. Victor Cancino, SJ, represented the Jesuits West Province, and he spent the preceding 11 months visiting communities and works so that he could reflect what was on the minds and in the hearts of those in the province.

The Congregation of Procurators' history dates back to the second General Congregation in 1565, when Jesuits recognized the need for more frequent meetings than the General Congregations. The Congregation of Procurators was envisioned to be held every few years, primarily to recommend whether a General Congregation should be convoked, but also as a way to bring before the global body of the Society any pressing issues that have arisen in the work, life and prayer of Jesuits around the world.

At the conclusion of the May 2023 Congregation, delegates voted that there was no need for a General Congregation at this time.

## SUPPORT JESUITS WEST THROUGH PLANNED GIVING



For information about designating Jesuits West in your estate plan, please contact Fr. Samuel Bellino, SJ, at (408) 884-1639 or [sbellino@jesuits.org](mailto:sbellino@jesuits.org).



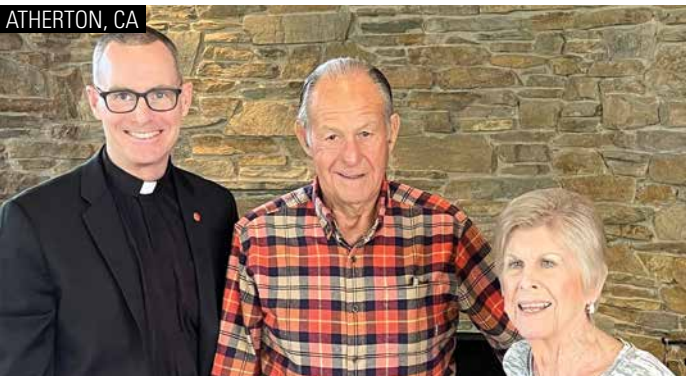
# JESUITS WEST HAPPENINGS



Greg Bui and Siobhán Lawlor



Jim and Sheila Mallahan and Fr. Sean Carroll, SJ



Fr. Sean Carroll, SJ, John and Susan Sobrato



Susan Sordello and Fr. John Mossi, SJ



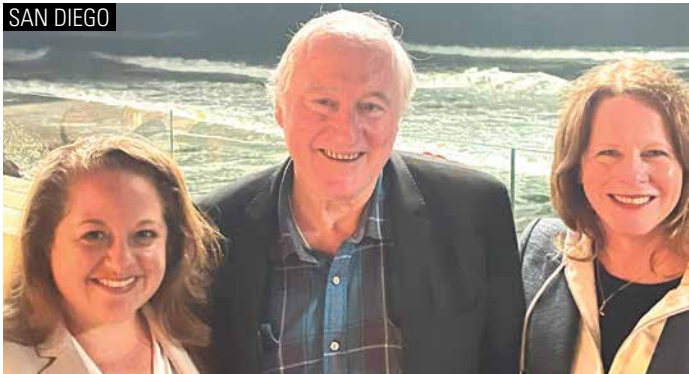
Fr. Sam Bellino, SJ, and Peter Davis



Yvonne Go, Fr. Sam Bellino, SJ, Monique Go, Jenny Go, and Fr. John Mossi, SJ, at Santa Clara University's Jesuit Community Chapel



Fr. John Mossi, SJ, Liz O'Grady and Fr. Sam Bellino, SJ



Donna Gray, John Cashman and Siobhán Lawlor



---

## Advancement Director's Letter



Dear Friends,

As the head of advancement for Jesuits West, I do my fair share of air travel throughout our 10-state region. I try to adhere to two basic precepts: no checked baggage and no conversations with seatmates. While I enjoy meeting new people, uninterrupted flight time is a luxury because I can respond to emails and finish long-lingering items on my to do list.

You cannot imagine how often I break my own rule. It happens just as soon as someone asks, "So what do you do for a living?" When I say that I raise funds for the Jesuits, I hear a variety of responses. Because the Society of Jesus is the largest religious order in the Church, many people have heard of the Jesuits. Some will have attended a Jesuit school, while others know that Pope Francis is a member of the order. Most people assume that I work in advancement for one of our high schools or universities, which is the moment when I get to explain that my primary job is to raise money to support the past and the future.

Here's what I mean. Many of our Jesuits spend decades at Jesuit high schools and universities, but when they need assisted living or infirmity care after a lifetime of service, they come home to the Jesuits West Province, specifically the province's retirement community, Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California. In a similar way, all the young Jesuits who are being formed to serve in Jesuit schools, parishes and other ministries are going through years of methodical study and training, all paid for by the province. In a sense, the province is the mother ship—or perhaps, more fittingly, the father ship—but regardless of the terminology, the province is responsible for caring for Jesuits at both the beginning of their lives of service and at the end.

I realize that it is hard to wrap your arms around a province—it is much easier to understand what a Jesuit school or university does. But the province plays a critical role not only in supporting Jesuits throughout their lifetime but in funding new ministries that serve those at the margins of society.

Many people are surprised when I tell them that the province's annual budget is over \$30 million, which is used to form new Jesuits, care for our senior members and fund new ministries. They are even more surprised to learn that 30% of these costs are dependent on philanthropic gifts.

The daughter of two Irish immigrants, I am proud of my Hibernian birthright, but I am equally proud of my Jesuit education and heritage, one that is shared by my husband, sons, brothers and sisters. When I look at my team of gift officers, they all have a variety of Jesuit connections as well. Most were educated by the Jesuits, or their children or grandchildren were, or they experienced Ignatian spirituality at a parish or retreat center.

My team is fortunate to have the support of the Jesuits, including our provincial, Father Sean Carroll, SJ, who carves out time in his busy calendar to meet with friends and benefactors throughout the province. I recall when I first started my job in 2016, Father Steve Sundborg, SJ, the former president of Seattle University and a former provincial, approached me and said, "I know what you do, and I want to help you." And he did.

I am blessed by this job, which gives my life such meaning. All I have to do is walk down the stairs from my office at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center to see firsthand what a difference our donors are making in the lives of these men I cherish.

On behalf of everyone at the Jesuits West Province, thank you for the many ways you walk with us in mission.

Gratefully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Siobhán Lawlor". The script is cursive and elegant.

Siobhán Lawlor

Vice President for Advancement & Provincial Assistant



**JESUITS**  
West

Jesuits West  
Office of Advancement  
PO Box 68  
Los Gatos, CA 95031-0068  
—  
jesuitswest.org

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
BURLINGAME, CA  
PERMIT #63

## MEET OUR 2023 ORDINANDS

This June, four new priests will be ordained from the Jesuits West Province at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Hollywood, California. Please keep our ordinands and those they will serve in your prayers.



James M. Antonio, SJ



Timothy R. Breen, SJ



Edward K. Ngô, SJ



Simon P. Zachary, SJ