Most of us gather annually with family and friends to celebrate our birthdays and our anniversaries to mark the passing of another year, or to start a new decade. For the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States, 2016 is a significant year because of three major anniversaries: the 375th Anniversary of the founding of the Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice (1641); the 225th Anniversary of the arrival of the Sulpician Fathers to Baltimore (1791); and lastly, the 200th Anniversary of the death of Father François Nagot, the first Superior of the Sulpicians in the United States.

The 225th anniversary was inaugurated with evening prayer celebrated by our Superior General, Father Ronald D. Witherup, PSS, with the General Council and the

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On March 13, 2015, Pope Francis announced a special jubilee year to focus on mercy. The Jubilee of Mercy began on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 2015 and concludes on the Feast of Christ the King, November 20, 2016.

"I am convinced that the whole Church will find in this jubilee the joy needed to rediscover and make fruitful the mercy of God, with which all of us are called to give consolation to every man and woman of our time," Pope Francis said. "From this moment, we entrust this holy year to the Mother of Mercy, that she might turn her gaze upon us and watch over our journey."

The motto "Merciful Like the Father" (taken from the Gospel of Luke, 6:36) serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of the Father who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure (cfr. Lk 6:37-38).

When reading the Misericordiae Vultus (The Face of Mercy) last April, one particular message stood out: "During Lent of this Holy Year, I intend to send out Missionaries of Mercy. They will be a sign of the Church's maternal solicitude for the People of God, enabling them to enter the profound richness of this mystery so fundamental to the faith." I wondered how these missionaries of mercy, these "witnesses of the closeness of God," would be chosen for this special apostolic responsibility.

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three provincials attending. The location for the event was the historic seminary chapel on Poca Street, Chapel of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple. This is the same chapel in which Fr. Nagot’s remains are entombed behind the main altar.

David Brinkley, the legendary news anchor once remarked, “A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him.” This axiom is certainly true of Fr. Nagot. Fr. Nagot was already a senior member of the Sulpician community, yet in an act of faith, at the age of 57, he left his homeland of France and set out for the New World. The bricks tossed at him were common for emigrants of his day, as they are today: leaving a life that was known and comfortable to set sail for an unknown land and trying to put down roots without the economic means to accomplish one’s dreams, all this coupled with his ongoing poor health.

Yet, with his apostolic spirit and his faith-filled perseverance, Fr. Nagot believed that this holy enterprise was the will of God for him. He endured all the bricks that were tossed at him by the circumstances of the day and from those bricks he built a foundation like none other. In his lifetime, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton would refer to him endearingly as “Holy Nagot.” Built with the bricks of the physical hardships and the discouragement he endured, Fr. Nagot laid the firm foundation upon which we stand today.

Thousands of priests across the United States have been formed in the Sulpician tradition, thanks to Fr. Nagot and other gentlemen of St. Sulpice who followed him. As we celebrate our 225th anniversary we are grateful for those who have provided us a firm foundation as we look to the future with renewed, faith-filled hope.

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Reproduction of a sketch by Simone Brute, PSS of Fr. François-Charles Nagot, PSS at his death. Courtesy of the Archives of the Associated Sulpicians

Update

is a publication that seeks to inform its readership of the state and current activities of the US Province of the Society of St. Sulpice, its membership and institutions. For more information please visit our website at www.sulpicians.org

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John C. Kemper, PSS, Provincial Superior, Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States

225th Anniversary Events

October 1, 2016
The Historic Site, St. Mary’s Seminary, Poca Street, Baltimore, MD
- Dedication of the new signage in St. Mary’s Park followed by a picnic reception at St. Mary’s Historic Site (sponsored by the US Province) with invited guests.

November 14, 2016
The Historic Site, St. Mary’s Seminary, Poca Street, Baltimore, MD
- Private Event for the USCCB sponsored by the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States
- An Evening with Cardinal Marc Ouellet, PSS, Sulpicians and invited guests
- Reception to follow

November 15, 2016
St. Mary’s Seminary & University, Roland Avenue, Baltimore, MD
- Public lecture by Cardinal Ouellet and his reception of an Honorary Doctorate
- Reception to follow
- Sponsored by the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States and St. Mary’s Seminary & University

On or near the Sulpician Feast Day, Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple, November 21
- Recommitment of Members to the vision of Father Jean-Jacques Olier
- Reaffirmation of Mission Statement
ment of Penance. As a confessor, I am called to remember my own existence as a sinner and to humbly act as a “channel” of God’s mercy.

As a Missionary of Mercy, I have been called to various dioceses and communities for days of recollection, retreats and conferences. And I have met many individuals who desire to overcome obstacles and take up the new life of Baptism again.

Fr. Vincent Bui, PSS, upon his introduction to Pope Francis as a seminary formator, receives a papal blessing.

A few months later, I received news from the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization regarding my appointment as one of the Missionaries of Mercy with invitation to join others in Rome for two special events: a special meeting with the Holy Father on February 9 in which he addressed the sensitive nature of our responsibility, and to concelebrate a Mass with him on Ash Wednesday, during which time Pope Francis conferred the mandate to the Missionaries.

In his address to us, Pope Francis emphasized two complementary aspects of the confessor. On the one hand, he is to express the motherhood of the Church—the mother who cares for her children, especially when they are suffering. On the other, confessors are to be real fathers—true pastors of souls—not judges. The maternal dimension of the Church in mediating the paternal love of the Father is essentially the task of the confessor.

Both the privilege and the responsibility of this special apostolic ministry—Missionary of Mercy—have helped to affirm my dedication and devotion for the Sacra-

Vincent D. Bui, PSS, Dean of Spiritual Life at St. Patrick Seminary & University.

In the midst of the Year of Mercy proclaimed by our Holy Father Pope Francis, I recall that this was a theme Father Olier addressed in several of his writings, especially in his correspondence. In one “letter”—really, a small spiritual tract (SP 361 in the new critical edition) written to someone who faced numerous fears and anxieties—Father Olier writes:

“I advise you always to have before you [God’s] infinite mercy, which absorbs every sin, like a fiery furnace consumes in an instant a piece of straw, or like the vast ocean absorbs in its bosom a grain of sand thrown into it. The mercy of God has no limits; it is immense, and before it, our sins are nothing but an atom. . . . This is where we find the great foundation of Christian confidence, of which you should often take advantage when your spirits are low in order to sustain yourself and to fortify yourself against your fears.”

These words strike me as very much at home with the present year of mercy and with the orientation Pope Francis has given the Church in our time. We should always remember God’s infinite mercy! Father Olier certainly knew many difficulties in his day. He often suffered, he had self-doubts, and he bore many crosses. But he never lost sight of the mercy of God and God’s grace at work in his everyday ministry. This is why, I believe, he could give such encouraging advice to another soul in need of some comfort and strength. Despite our own weaknesses and challenges, may we recall indeed that God’s mercy knows no bounds. May we ourselves accept it with open hearts and extend it to others!

Ronald D. Witherup, PSS
After a long flight from San Francisco through Dubai, I arrived in Lusaka on Friday before Holy Week. Father Cornelius Hankomoone, PSS, the Regional Superior, picked me up at Kenneth Kaunda International Airport, named after the first president of Zambia. It is a compact airport and relatively easy to navigate. We got to the car and joined the line of mostly Toyotas heading out of the airport onto the two lane roads. I was reminded of the time I spent in India, where the steering wheel was also on the right side of the car. The road was filled with cars, cyclists and pedestrians. Fr. Hankomoone told me that many people do not have cars or a bicycle so walking was the most common way to get around. People walk everywhere, day or night.

I stayed at the Center House, the residence of the Regional Superior. It was comfortable and surrounded by a park-like atmosphere. A few feet away from the house is the Chapel, donated by the Ulshafer family, that will be dedicated next October. Father John Kemper and I celebrated Palm Sunday at Emmaus Spiritual Centre, the entry point for seminarians into the seminary system. It was my first experience of Zambian liturgy which is embedded in music and movement. Palms were blessed outside and then we processed into the chapel for the Mass of Passion Sunday. The experience reminded me of the universality of the Church, with Christians all over the world celebrating this day in their own way. In the evening we had dinner with a group of Zambian priests who completed the licentiate in sacred theology (STL) at St. Mary's Seminary & University.
Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper. Father Cornelius Hankamoone, PSS, presider; Fathers John Kemper, PSS, and Anthony Pogorelc, PSS, principal concelebrants.

The Holy Thursday Mandatum, Emmaus Chapel

in Baltimore through a scholarship program cosponsored by the seminary and the Province of the United States.

The week was filled with interacting with the local churches in a variety of ways. We visited the US embassy and heard praise for the Zambian Bishops’ support of human rights and social justice. We enjoyed lunch with the Nuncio. From there, we headed to the diocese of Chapata and had delightful meetings with Bishop Ben­jamin Phiri, the head of seminaries for the Zambian Episcopal Conference, and Bishop George Lungu, the ordinary. Later in the week we visited Arch­bishop Mpundu and the Cathedral of the Child Jesus. I had the opportunity to visit all of the schools that prepare candidates for ministry: St. Augustine’s Major Seminary (Mpima); St. Dominic’s, the School of The­ology; and St. Bonaventure, a school of Phil­osophy. On Easter Sunday, we gathered with all our Sulpician confreres to discuss our mission and celebrate the new life it gives to the Society and to the whole Church.

Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS, Director of Initial Formation, Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States.

Seminarian musical ensemble: Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper

Fr. Pogorelc, presider and homilist, Monday of Holy Week. Emmaus Chapel
Father John C. Kemper, PPS, Provincial Superior, welcomes those gathered for the 225th Anniversary Vespers Service at the historic seminary chapel, St. Mary’s Paca Street, Baltimore, MD.

2016 marks the 225th anniversary of the arrival of the first Sulpician fathers in the United States and the foundation of Saint Mary’s, the first Catholic seminary in what was then the only diocese in the new nation. The presence of the General Council and the three Provincial Superiors of the Society for meetings in Washington provided a good opportunity for beginning the celebration of this event. On April 22nd, a gathering of local Sulpicians assembled in the historic chapel on Paca Street for an evening prayer at which our Superior General, Father Ronald Witherup, presided and preached. Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore and Archbishop Timothy Broglio of the Archdiocese of the Military were in attendance along with civic leaders, a large group of friends and benefactors of the Society and members of the US Provincial Council.

Fr. Witherup began his reflections with the observation that, in fact, this is an important anniversary year for the Society for other reasons as well. It is the 375th anniversary of the foundation of the Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice by Father Olier and the bicentennial of the death of Father François-Charles Nagot, the first Superior of the community in the United States. His remains are interred in that chapel behind the high altar.
He then posed the question: what could have motivated this adventurous initiative on the part of those four Sulpicians and five seminarians who arrived in Baltimore's harbor on July 10, 1791? He went on to cite three factors. First, there was a perceived need in a young local Church, combined with a crisis in the homeland. The Sulpicians were undergoing severe persecution and faced suppression in France. Eighteen members of the Society were executed during the reign of terror. Father Jacques-André Emery, the Superior General of that time, was most anxious to preserve the mission of the Society. On hearing of the establishment of the new diocese he saw and seized the opportunity to carry on the Sulpician tradition in a new setting, and he asked Fr. Nagot to direct the project.

Secondly, from its very beginnings, the Society had been formed by Fr. Olier to prize the “apostolic spirit,” zeal for the work of evangelization. It was surely that spirit that gave Fr. Nagot, at a relatively advanced age, the courage to accept a mission that was to involve considerable hardship and sacrifice on his part. We Sulpicians strive still to cultivate the “esprit apostolique” in ourselves and in those who are entrusted to us for the task of their priestly formation.

Third, it was most certainly a profound love of the Church and its ordained priesthood that motivated Fr. Olier in founding the Society in 1641 and that spurred on Fr. Nagot to take the mission of priestly formation to the Church in the United States in 1791. Fr. Witherup concluded with a statement of his confidence in the work of his brother Sulpicians in the United States Province and throughout the world: “May the Lord bless this endeavor as always, and may our service in the formation of priests produce abundant and faithful workers for the Lord’s vineyard for at least the next 225 years.”


Bernard Pitaud, PSS
A collection of essays by the former Provincial of the French Province of Sulpicians and a noted expert on the French School of Spirituality, on the principles of spiritual direction, especially as practiced in the spirituality and pedagogy of the Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice. Most of the essays appeared in various journals during a span of many years. English and Spanish translations are in process.


Thomas R. Ulshafer, PSS
This book was written to commemorate both the 200th Anniversary of the death of Father Nagot (April 9, 1816) and the 225th Anniversary of the opening of St. Mary’s Seminary & University in Baltimore, our nation’s first Catholic seminary (October 3, 1791). The work is an account of the life of this saintly man that also puts him and his accomplishments into a wider historical context and shows the continuity of his ministry in the US with his long prior ministry in France.
Thirteenth Institute for Seminary Formators

June 7-14, 2017
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Theological College
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Jean-Jacques Oliger (1608-1657)
Servant of God – Founder Society of the Priests of St. Sulpice

The Thirteenth Institute for Seminary Formators is presented by the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States, as a formational program for those who minister within the seminary as an advisor, a spiritual director or a member of the formation team. The Institute employs a workshop format to provide an opportunity for the education and formation for those who assume the responsibility of forming future priests. This biennial Institute for Seminary Formators seeks to situate these important formational roles within the vision of Pastores Dabo Vobis and the Program of Priestly Formation.

More details and registration on-line at http://www.sulpiicians.org/thirteenthinstitute/

The General Council of the Society of Saint Sulpice meets only three times a year for one-week sessions. In between, the Superior General implements the decisions of the Council in governing the Society. Normally, the spring meeting is held in Rome, although at times this particular meeting changes venue. This year, the Council and the three Provincials were invited to Theological College April 18-22, 2016. It was a marvelous experience, hosted well by Father Phillip Brown, PSS, rector of TC, along with the faculty, staff and seminarians.

Visitors to Our Lady of the Angels Chapel, historic Sulpician chapel of St. Charles Seminary, Catonsville, MD

Participating in the meeting, in addition to the Superior General, were the four consultors—David Thayer of the US; Argiro Restrepo from Montreal, Canada; Joseph Ho Thu, Rector of the Sulpician seminary in Hue, Vietnam; and Pierre de Martin de Viviés, from the Province of France—and the three Provincials, John Kemper (US), Jacques D’Arcy (Canada) and Jean-Marc Micas (France).

Holding the meeting at TC was both practical and innovative. Fr. Brown serves as the General Treasurer of the Society, and he presented to the Council a proposed budget for 2016-17. In addition, Father David Thayer, PSS, another TC faculty member, serves as the first consultor on the General Council. So it was convenient to hold the meeting on their “home turf.”

Moreover, the meeting provided a first-time opportunity for some of the consultors and Provincials to visit the United States in person, especially several important Sulpician sites: Theological College, St. Mary’s Seminary & University in Baltimore; St. Mary’s Spiritual Center & Historic Site on Paca Street; and Our Lady of the Angels Parish and St. Charles Villa in Catonsville. In Baltimore, all participated in the farewell celebration for Father Thomas Hurst, PSS, and the inauguration of the 225th anniversary year of the US Province. The meeting also provided an occasion to tour Washington, DC in the springtime, when the cherry blossoms were in evidence.

In addition to the financial decisions, the Council and Provincials discussed various ongoing projects, especially planning for an international meeting of the General Council and three Provincial Councils, which will take place in July 2017.

All in all, everyone agreed that the meeting was both productive and a great pleasure. The General Council extends sincere gratitude to Theological College and the US Province for their excellent hospitality.

Ronald D. Witherup, PSS,
Superior General,
Society of St. Sulpice.
The Provincial Treasurers and General Treasurer of the Society of St. Sulpice and their assistants met in Paris February 29 and March 1, 2016. They meet every two years to discuss subjects of mutual interest, to explore ways they can cooperate and collaborate for the good of the Provinces and the Society as a whole and to make recommendations to the General Council regarding finance.

Attending this year were Father Phil Brown, PSS General Treasurer and Father Christian Courtois, PSS General Treasurer-Adjoint; Father Jean-Loup Lacroix, PSS the French Treasurer and his assistant Michel Marquet; Ms. Suzie Amyot, Treasurer-Adjoint of Canada; and Father Jim Lothamer, PSS, Treasurer of the US and Ms. Ann Lesini, the US Treasurer-Adjoint. Father Carlos Ballén, PSS, Provincial Treasurer of Canada was unable to attend the meeting. Father Ron Witherup, Superior General, also attended part of the meeting, as did Heather Errigo, investment consultant for the US Province, who presented on investment policies and strategies.

Reports were given on the Provinces’ and Generalate’s investments over the past five years relating to a discussion of investment strategies and how the Provinces and the Generalate might assist one another. Each Province is doing well in most areas, and each faces special challenges due to circumstances in their Province. It was also discovered how different the circumstances of each province are, making collaborative approaches to finances difficult across the whole Society. This concerns the investment climate in different areas and differences in the legal systems within which each Province operates. Nevertheless, the Treasurers concluded there are unexplored possibilities for greater cooperation and collaboration regarding finance.

Ms. Errigo gave a presentation on general investment policies and strategies for maximizing the results of financial management. Ms. Errigo is associated with LYNX Investment Advisory, a consulting firm employed by the US Province. After Evening Prayer and a reception hosted by Fr. Witherup, the Treasurers and assistants were treated to a Seine dinner cruise by the Province of France.

The second day involved update reports on the financial status of each Province and the Generalate, and a review of policies about Provincial contributions to the Generalate and a special fund maintained for the education and retirement needs of confreres in foreign lands. The meeting ended with an extensive discussion of the Society’s archives and the most effective and equitable way to provide for their preservation and maintenance. This discussion anticipated a meeting of the Provincial Archivists in Paris this fall.

Those in attendance agreed that the meeting was a success, and very helpful to the Treasurers for the carrying out of their responsibilities. The next meeting of the Treasurers will take place in 2018 in Montreal.
In Memoriam:

Peter Francis Chirico, PSS
May 4, 1927 - May 6, 2016

Richard M. Gula, PSS

Peter Francis Chirico was born on May 4, 1927 in Brooklyn, NY to Peter and Anna Chirico. He is survived by his two sisters, Anna (Slater) and Eleanor (Sparaco), and two nephews, Peter and Eugene.

Fr. Chirico was ordained for the Diocese of Camden, New Jersey in 1956. He earned his undergraduate degrees, BBA in 1949 and BA in 1952 at St. John’s University in Brooklyn, New York. He completed his seminary training at St. Mary’s Seminary & University in Baltimore, earning a licentiate in sacred theology (STL) in 1956. Fr. Chirico received his doctorate in sacred theology (STD) from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome in 1960.

Fr. Chirico was admitted to the Society of St. Sulpice in 1958 and served on the faculty of St. Thomas Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky (1956-1957). After doctoral studies, he was sent to the West Coast where he spent the rest of his active ministry as a Sulpician. He served on the faculty of St. Thomas Seminary in Kenmore, Washington (1960 – 1969) and then at St. Patrick’s Seminary in Menlo Park, California (1970-1975). While at St. Patrick’s, he earned the respect of Archbishop McCracken with whom he had many spirited theological discussions. He returned to St. Thomas Seminary in 1976. After the seminary closed in 1977, Fr. Chirico remained in Seattle to serve as a consultant to the Archdiocese and to teach at Seattle University and in the parishes throughout the Archdiocese until 1986. He rejoined the faculty at St. Patrick’s Seminary from 1986 to 1989. In 1989, Fr. Chirico returned to Seattle to lecture in parishes and to serve as theologian for the Archdiocese with residence at St. James Cathedral. Fr. Chirico loved the Northwest and he was much loved by a supportive network of lay, clerical and religious friends, who kept in touch with him until he died.

Fr. Chirico lived with Parkinson disease for more than 25 years. He moved to the Sulpician retirement community of St. Charles Villa in Baltimore, Maryland in 2003. In 2007, Fr. Chirico was transferred to the nursing facility of St. Martin’s Home in Baltimore and remained there until his death in 2016.

Brilliant though he was and always alive with ideas, Fr. Chirico was also a very gentle man with a discerning heart and keen insight into the human condition. His manner of relating to others stemmed from his deep respect for persons. Only one who lives with wisdom as he did could be so inclusive of others and open to their ideas. He epitomized the notion that what a teacher is, is more important than what the teacher teaches.

Fr. Chirico died peacefully on May 6, 2016. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on May 18 at Our Lady of the Angels Chapel in Charlestown Village. The Provincial, Father John Kemper, PSS, was the main celebrant and Father Michael G. Ryan, pastor of St. James Cathedral in Seattle and longtime friend of Fr. Chirico, gave the homily. Interment followed in the Sulpician Cemetery in Catonsville, Maryland.

Fr. Chirico was priest, scholar, teacher, and warm friend—all spiced with wisdom and wit. We look back with much appreciation for such a brilliant teacher and scholar and with even more gratitude for such a warm friend. Through Christ, this man of God has returned to that divine embrace of love beyond our imagining.

Richard M. Gula, PSS, Director of Personnel, Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States.
Those familiar either with the history of the Sulpicians in the US or with the origins of St. Mary’s Seminary & University already know the key facts about Father Nagot’s ministry in this country. They know:

- that, in 1791, Fr. Nagot came here from France at the invitation of Bishop John Carroll and served as the first Sulpician superior in the US,
- that he founded St. Mary’s Seminary, the first Catholic seminary in this country,
- that he enabled Father William DuBourg to found the first Catholic college in the city of Baltimore, and
- that, in 1806, Fr. Nagot founded a minor seminary program in southern Pennsylvania that he moved to Emmitsburg, Maryland, and placed under the leadership of Father John Dubois, the first superior of Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary.

However, there are a number of things about Fr. Nagot’s 25 years in the US that few know much about. Here are three of them. First, he suffered periodically from very poor health. In 1795 he had a stroke while dining with Bishop Carroll, and the following year, he had a very serious case of malaria. These two illnesses left him chronically weak and prompted him to ask to resign as superior, a request that was not granted.

Then, in the fall of 1808, Father Tessier wrote, “Father Nagot, being very ill and thinking that he was near the end, received Holy Viaticum.” The next summer, Fr. Nagot himself wrote, “Stomach pain, pain more severe than ever, and the constant nausea have been a serious warning for me to think daily that death is near at hand and to prepare for it in a special way.” A few months later, Archbishop Carroll wrote, “The Venerable Second, Fr. Nagot had a hobby. When he arrived in Baltimore, he invested in 10 acres behind the original seminary property. In the 1790's, while he was facing very low enrollment at the Seminary and struggling with the financial difficulties that this generated, he planted a peach orchard “with his own hands” on this acreage. Fr. Tessier noted occasionally that Fr. Nagot was out in the orchard grafting branches or pruning the foliage. This gardening, along with a steady regimen of prayer, were his way of coping with the discouragement and ill health of those difficult years.

Third, and finally, Fr. Nagot came very close to giving up on the whole US mission 10 years after he had arrived. There were still almost no seminarians to train, and Napoleon’s rise to power in France led to the reopening of Sulpician seminaries there. Father Emery, Fr. Nagot’s superior, invited him to return to France “if his health permitted,” and he was even elected to the central leadership of the Sulpicians. He planned to return with Fathers Garnier, Levadoux and Maréchal during the summer of 1803, but at that point he wrote, “Providence finally willed that we succeed completely in carrying out our project. It was necessary to battle all sorts of obstacles in order to be where we are today.” And so he remained in the US until his death in 1816 when he was 82.
On April 21, the St. Mary’s Seminary & University community celebrated a farewell reception for President-Rector Father Thomas P. Hurst, PSS, preceded by the celebration of solemn Vespers in the seminary chapel. The liturgical procession was preceded by a procession of the faculty, who donned academic regalia for the event.

William E. Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore, presided at Vespers and delivered the homily. Francis Malooly, Bishop of the Diocese of Wilmington; Denis Madden, Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore; Ronald D. Witherup, PSS, Superior General of the Society of St. Sulpice; and John C. Kemper, PSS, US Provincial Superior were in attendance. Robert F. Leavitt, PSS, Fr. Hurst’s predecessor; Monsignor Owen Campion, St. Mary’s alumnus and associate publisher, Our Sunday Visitor; members of the General Council of the Society of St. Sulpice and the US Provincial Council were also present.

In his homily, Archbishop Lori recalled the homily given by his predecessor, Edwin Cardinal O’Brien, on the occasion of Fr. Hurst’s installation as rector in 2007. At the time, Archbishop O’Brien praised Fr. Hurst for being a priest with the spiritual, pastoral and intellectual leadership qualities necessary for assuming the office of President-Rector of St. Mary’s. Archbishop Lori demonstrated how Fr. Hurst had ably fulfilled these dimensions of ministry at the seminary during his nine year tenure that followed.

Prior to the final blessing, Mr. David Kinkopf, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, delivered brief remarks on behalf of the board. He was then followed by Fr. Witherup, who spoke on behalf of the Sulpicians. In a heart-warming speech, Fr. Hurst concluded the Vespers ceremony with remarks of his own. He expressed his gratitude to the entire seminary community and his friends present at the event. He spoke directly to the seminarians and reminded them that they were the number one reason why he accepted the offer to become the head of the nation’s first Roman Catholic seminary. He exhorted them to be good and holy priests, after the heart of the Good Shepherd.

A reception in Laubacher Hall followed the Vespers service.
New Appointments

Rev. Phillip J. Brown, P.S.S.
President-Rector of St. Mary's Seminary & University

The Provincial Council of the U.S. Province of the Society of St. Sulpice has appointed Sulpician Father Phillip J. Brown, P.S.S., J.D., J.C.D., as President-Rector of St. Mary's Seminary & University in Baltimore, Maryland, effective July 1, 2016. This appointment has been made by the Sulpician Council with the approval of Most Reverend William Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore and Chancellor of St. Mary's, and the Holy See.

The Sulpician Provincial Father John C. Kemper praised the appointment, saying, "Father Brown brings a wealth of experience in priestly formation to his new position. He is a dedicated and hardworking priest who has a wealth of experience in seminary administration."

Father Brown has been Rector of Theological College, the national seminary at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC since 2011. An alumus of Theological College, Father Brown was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Bismarck in 1989. He has been a Sulpician since 2005.

Father Brown holds a doctorate in Canon Law from the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, Italy, and he also holds a civil law degree as well. Prior to his current position at Theological College, he was a faculty member of the School of Canon Law at The Catholic University of America from 2006-2010 and President of the Canon Law Society of America from 2012-2015. Since 2009, Father Brown has served as the General Treasurer for the Society of St. Sulpice, Paris, France. Father Brown will replace the Reverend Thomas R. Hurst, S.T.L., Ph.D., who has been President-Rector for nine years.

St. Mary's Seminary & University was founded by Sulpician Fathers from France in 1791 and is the oldest Roman Catholic seminary in the United States. This year marks the 225th Anniversary of St. Mary’s Seminary and the Sulpician fathers in the United States.

Rev. Gerald D. McBrearity, P.S.S.
Rector of Theological College of The Catholic University of America

The Provincial Council of the U.S. Province of the Society of St. Sulpice has appointed Sulpician Father Gerald D. McBrearity, P.S.S., S.T.B., D.Min., M.A. as Rector of Theological College, the national seminary at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, effective July 1, 2016. This appointment has been made by the Sulpician Council with the approval of His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl, S.T.D., Archbishop of Washington and Chancellor of the University, and John H. Garvey, J.D. President of The Catholic University of America.

The Sulpician Provincial Father John C. Kemper praised the appointment, saying, "Father McBrearity has served on various levels of administration within the U.S. Province and our seminaries, he brings a wealth of experience as a seminary educator and formator. I know Fr. McBrearity possesses a "pastor's heart" which he brings to the task of priestly formation and that he will bring to this new assignment as Rector of Theological College."

Father McBrearity has been Vice-Rector of Theological College since 2011. An alumnus of Theological College, Father McBrearity was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Atlanta in 1973. He has been a Sulpician since 1975.

Father McBrearity received his S.T.B., M.A. in systematic theology, and D.Min. from The Catholic University of America. Father McBrearty will replace the Reverend Phillip J. Brown, P.S.S., J.D., J.C.D., who has been Rector for five years.

Theological College is a national Roman Catholic Seminary, affiliated with The Catholic University of America. Founded in 1917, Theological College is owned and operated by the Society of St. Sulpice, pioneers in priestly formation in the United States. This year marks the 225th Anniversary of the Sulpician Fathers arrival from France to the United States.
Father Inniah Christy “Chris” Arockiaraj is a Sulpician priest concluding his graduate studies. He is in residence at St. Patrick’s in Menlo Park, California where his primary mission is completing his Doctor of Ministry Degree from the San Francisco Theological Seminary, which is associated with the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley. Fr. Arockiaraj teaches one course at St. Patrick’s and is a formation advisor and spiritual director to a handful of seminarians so that he has the time and space for working on his thesis. The focus of his thesis is on helping priests be better priests by employing strength-psychology to assess their relative balance of strengths and weaknesses. Fr. Arockiaraj says: “My research findings reveal that strength-based leadership in the Church could help priests, especially young pastors, cope with potential burnout. It can also enable them to build an engaged Church through active lay involvement.” This is indeed an important matter, and Fr. Arockiaraj can make an important contribution to the life and health of priests in the US by publishing it.

Fr. Arockiaraj was ordained in 1995 as a priest for the Archdiocese of Madras-Mylapore in India. Its cathedral is built over what is believed to be the tomb of St. Thomas the Apostle. He met the Sulpicians in Baltimore and became a definitive member of the Society this past May. He has had previous experience in formation work; he was both Academic Dean and Dean of Men in the Sacred Heart Seminary of Chennai. He has also served as a spiritual director, counselor and chaplain. Psychology is not the only discipline he has studied. He has a Licentiate in Philosophy from The Catholic University of Toulouse in France and a Master of Arts in Literature from Madras University. Fr. Arockiaraj relates that he loves being in the libraries of schools surrounding Menlo Park such as Stanford, because their intellectual environment feeds his love of learning.

Fr. Arockiaraj will complete the writing of his thesis in spring 2016. The fall will find him once again fully engaged in ministry at St. Patrick’s. He is highly regarded by his teachers and confreres and will serve the Society of St. Sulpice and the Church well as a teacher and minister to seminarians and priests.

Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS, Vice Rector & Academic Dean, St. Patrick’s Seminary & University.
Father Jaime E. Robledo was born on July 6, 1964 in Tulúa, Colombia, in the heart of his home state, Valle del Cauca. Fr. Robledo completed his seminary studies at Sulpician-run Semanario Mayor Arquidiocesano “San Pedro Apóstol” in Cali. He was ordained for his native Diocese of Buga on January 27, 1990. He served as a pastor for two years before joining the faculty of his alma mater in Cali for a year. Fr. Robledo also taught and served as rector for two years at the “Instituto de Cultura Religiosa Julián Mendoza Guerrero,” an institute for the new evangelization of the culture.

Fr. Robledo entered the Society of Saint Sulpice as a candidate in 2011, bringing with him a great wealth of education and experience. Currently a full time faculty member, Fr. Robledo has proved to be a valuable and versatile member of the formation faculty at St. Patrick’s Seminary & University, Menlo Park, having taught courses for the departments of dogmatic theology, moral theology and pre-theology. Fr. Robledo is also chair of the moral theology/spirituality section. He is on the Program Review Committee and a member of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. Prior to coming to the Sulpicians, he earned an STL in 1995 at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. His area of specialization was dogmatic theology with an emphasis on theological anthropology. From 2006-2009, while on the faculty of Assumption Seminary, San Antonio, Fr. Robledo continued his studies as his schedule permitted.

Among his many duties at the seminary, he also served as the Director of Liturgy.

After joining the Sulpicians and receiving his first assignment to St. Patrick’s, he renewed his quest for a doctorate during the summer months in Colombia from 2012 to 2015 at the Pontifical University Bolivariana. Fr. Robledo’s topic bridges the fields of theology and bioethics. He explains, “We need to build a bridge between these two fields in order to form priests and laity with a consistent understanding of magisterial teachings in bioethics. More concretely, I am trying to build this bridge using the personalist model of bioethics whose pioneer is Cardinal Elio Sgreccia.”

In fall 2015, with his previous work transferring, Jaime was accepted into the doctoral program at St. Mary’s Seminary & University, Baltimore. His dissertation director is St. Mary’s faculty member Monsignor David I. Fulton, STD, JCD. Well into the writing phase of his dissertation, Fr. Robledo hopes to finish his degree by the summer of 2017.
"Heavenly Father, I thank you for this new opportunity you’ve brought my way. Whenever I feel nerves rising up in me as a result of this transition, I remember that you, Father, know the plans you have for me; plans to prosper and not to harm me, plans to give me hope and a future. I hold on to this promise as I move through this transition and it is a constant source of encouragement for me...Amen."

New Chapel, St Charles Villa, Catonsville, MD.

Six senior Sulpicians have been praying and living those words, authored anonymously, since the first chainsaw roared on August 31, 2015, which marked the start of the renovation to St. Charles Villa, these men, aptly described as "the Wisdom of the Province," have spent decades devoted to accompanying others through moments of transition. They negotiated a rather large "moment of transition" themselves in their own quiet, prayerful, humor-laden, gentlemanly ways.

The months of disorientation, discomfort and uncertainty were endured, because it was also a time that everyone knew was pregnant with promised possibilities of a new and larger life yet to come.

That life was born on March 30, 2016, in the form of a bright, spacious, welcoming, prayer beckoning chapel; a living room now adorned with plush dark brown leather recliners; expansive apartments; a freshly appointed reference library; and a renewed and refashioned kitchen and dining room ably managed by our senior chef, Joe Ptak.

The soon to be completed renovation reverences the life and service of all the retired men who reside here. Such was the intent of the past and present leadership of the Province.

We look forward to September, not simply for the lengthy project to be brought to closure, but more importantly to welcome six other seasoned Sulpicians, who are expected to become prospering "possibillarians, just like those who are already here!

Daniel J. Doherty, PSS, Director of St. Charles Villa.

* The word comes from Norman Vincent Peale, who wrote: "I challenge you to become a 'possibillarian'. No matter how dark things seem to be or actually are, raise your sights and see the possibilities - always see them, for they are always there."