International Meeting of Sulpician Leadership

The Center for Continuing Formation at St. Mary’s Seminary & University hosted a meeting of the international leadership of the Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice from July 20 to 25. Leadership includes the General Council and the three Provincial Councils of France, Canada, and the United States, each of which has five members. In addition, Fr. Bernard Pitaud, PSS, presented a lecture on important principles from Sulpician founder Fr. Jean-Jacques Olier.

The purpose of the meeting was to confront critical issues facing the Society, such as changing demographics, recruitment and retention of new members, and future governance structures. The group used an “appreciative discernment” process, which began by analyzing the many positive aspects of the Sulpician ministry of initial and ongoing formation of priests, and the formation of formators.

The meeting, hosted by Fr. John C. Kemper, PSS, U.S. Provincial, was the first one held in Baltimore since 1991, the Province’s bicentennial. The present session coincided with the Province’s 225th anniversary and the 375th anniversary of the Society’s founding in 1642 by Fr. Olier, when he became pastor of the Church of Saint Sulpice in Paris.

Highlights of the meeting included a day-long excursion in Baltimore to showcase some important historic sites. These included a concelebrated Eucharist at Our Lady of the Angels Parish in Charlestown Retirement Community, a luncheon with retired Sulpicians.

(Continued on next page)
International Meeting  (Continued from p. 1)

at the nearby, newly renovated Villa Olier, guided visits to St. Mary’s Spiritual Center & Historic Site on Paca Street and the Basilica of the Assumption, a brief visit to Fort McHenry, and a festive dinner at Dalesio’s Restaurant in Little Italy.

On July 24, Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore presided at a Eucharist with all the participants, offering insights into his appreciation of the French School of Spirituality.

The meeting was a grand success, providing important reflections for the General Council to begin planning the next General Assembly (2020), when elected delegates from around the world will meet in Paris to address the Society’s future.

Ronald D. Witherup, PSS, Superior General

Since 1998, the Canadian Province of the Society of St. Sulpice has held a joint Solitude program (the Sulpician formation program) with the French Province in Montreal and Oka, Quebec. This year the Franco-Canadian Solitude consisted of fifteen priests from ten countries: Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Canada, Cameroon, Colombia, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Netherlands, and Togo. The directors were Fr. Arghiro Restrepo, PSS, from Colombia, and Mgr. Georges Soubrier, PSS, Bishop emeritus of Nantes, from France.

As part of this program, the U.S. Province sponsored a six-day trip to the United States, from April 25 to 30. The purpose of this visit was to enhance interprovincial collaboration and to introduce the candidates from the other two provinces to the U.S. Province.

The Solitaires resided at St. Mary’s Center for Continuing Formation, a setting that gave them an opportunity to interact with the seminarians as well as to have their own formal meetings that included three major presentations: Fr. Tom Hurst, PSS, presented on the state of seminary education in the U.S.; Dr. Tricia Pyne, director of the Associated Archives, presented on the history of the Sulpicians in the U.S.; and Archbishop Lori of Baltimore gave a presentation on the French School of spirituality from his U.S. perspective.

The visit also included a tour of the major Sulpician sites in Baltimore and Washington: the Provincial House, the Archives, St. Mary’s Spiritual Center and Historic Site on Paca Street, the Basilica, Our Lady of the Angels chapel in Catonsville, Villa Olier, Theological College, and the National Shrine in Washington, D.C.

As a result of this experience, the Solitaires took away some important lessons:

• The international and multicultural composition of the Society of St. Sulpice, which is considered as a treasure and challenge in the present and for the future of our Society
• The deep missionary and apostolic spirit that identifies the members everywhere
• The priority and the ecclesial need of the Sulpician charism of initial and ongoing priestly formation
• The profound unity among the diversity of the Society’s membership
• The motivation to work for closer collaboration among the three provinces as members of the one worldwide Society of Saint-Sulpice
• The importance of our new candidates to the Society having some fluency in French, English, and Spanish

The participants were most grateful to the U.S. Province for its generosity in offering extraordinary hospitality. The regular presence of Fr. John Kemper, PSS, the Provincial Superior, throughout the whole program was very important to them and greatly appreciated.

This interprovincial gathering enhances the Sulpician vision to realize fully the ideal of Christian and priestly sanctity proposed by its founder Jean-Jacques Olier: Vivere summe Deo in Christo Jesu.

Jaime Alfonso Mora, PSS
Consultor & Provincial Secretary
Province of Canada

“The Society of San Sulpice is blessed with a living charism and heritage well-suited for the times that are unfolding before us.”
—Archbishop William E. Lori
Many residents of Villa Olier and Charlestown enjoyed the grand opening of the Villa’s new Charlestown entrance on April 2, 2017. The ribbon cutting for the entrance and the dedication of the new statue of Fr. Jean-Jacques Olier was hosted by Fr. John C. Kemper, PSS, Provincial Superior. A reception followed.

Attendees declared that the newly renovated facility is beautiful and the festivities were delightful. This was another celebration to mark the redesign of the Villa and renaming of the facility to Villa Olier, this time encompassing the new entrance and statue. The renovated and named Villa Olier had been blessed by Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore in September. The April celebration highlighted the strong, meaningful, and long-standing relationship between the Sulpicians and Charlestown.

Clara Parker, Charlestown’s executive director, said, “Well over three decades ago, John Erickson, Charlestown’s founder, strolled the grounds of the St. Charles College. After careful consideration and a belief that this would be his life’s mission, he soon decided this property would be the home of his newest business venture, a retirement community for individuals over 62 years of age. A successful partnership began between the Sulpicians and Charlestown, which continues today.

“Since late 1983, thousands of people have called Charlestown home and have enjoyed the very best years of their lives in our community. This would not have happened without the early partnership between Charlestown’s founder and the Sulpicians.

“Now we enter a new phase in this important relationship. We are very pleased to open our community gates to Villa Olier, the retirement home of the Society of St. Sulpice.

“This new gateway will provide easy access for the residents of Villa Olier to visit and participate in activities both in Our Lady of the Angels Chapel and in the broader Charlestown Community.

“I welcome the residents of Villa Olier to Charlestown and imagine we may soon see the Fathers making their way around the community in a golf cart in the near future! Drive safely!”

Clara Parker, Charlestown Executive Director
13th Institute for Seminary Formators Draws 36 Participants

In The Gift of the Priestly Vocation, the Ratio Fundamentalis for seminary formation released on December 8, 2016, we find a clear statement about the importance of preparation of those who have undertaken the ministry of seminary formation. It states: “The formator must exercise discretion when it comes to the lives of seminarians. Each formator shall be possessed of human, spiritual, pastoral, and professional abilities and resources, so as to provide the right kind of accompaniment that is balanced and respectful of the freedom and the conscience of the other person, and that will help him in his human and spiritual growth. Moreover, those who are marked out to become formators need a specific preparation and generous dedication to this important task. Formators are needed who can ensure their full-time presence and who, above all else, are witnesses of how to serve the people of God, giving themselves without reserve for the Church.” (49)

The institute for the Preparation of Seminary Formation Staff and Advisors, also known as the Institute for Seminary Formators, was developed by the U.S. Sulpicians precisely to prepare those who have assumed the role of a seminary formator by the U.S. Province of Zambia. Born on April 24, 1987, he is the second of three children. His parents are the late Simon Cheba and Petronella Kabwe from Northern Province.

Fr. Simon Cheba is from Kitwe in the Copperbelt Province of Zambia. Born on April 24, 1987, he is the second of three children. His parents are the late Simon Cheba and Petronella Kabwe from Northern Province. His schooling began in 1993 at Kitwe Main Primary School. In the fifth grade, in 1997, he was transferred to Rokana Basic School, where he graduated to junior secondary school in 1999. After the death of his mother in 2000, he stayed with his grandfather in Livingstone, the tourist capital of Zambia, and was enrolled at St. Raphael’s Secondary School where he completed his secondary education in 2004.

After high school, in 2005, he applied for formation to priesthood under the Catholic Diocese of Livingstone. He was eventually admitted to Emmaus Spirituality Centre to begin his formation for priesthood. It was while at Emmaus that Fr. Cheba met the Sulpicians, to whom he was attracted because of their commitment to formation and work. After successfully completing the preparatory year, he proceeded to St. Augustine’s Major Seminary in Kabwe, where he obtained a diploma in Philosophy and Religious Studies in 2008. After that, he went to St. Dominick’s Major Seminary in Livingstone by Bishop Raymond Mpezele on August 17, 2013.

After his ordination, he was appointed assistant pastor at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Sioma Parish, where he served for three years. Fr. Cheba was accepted as a candidate in the Oblate School for Theology in 2016. He was assigned to and is currently serving at Emmaus Spirituality Centre as formator and lecturer.

Edward Mwepya is an enthusiastic, energetic young priest with great interpersonal and management skills and a reputation for working diligently. He started his primary education in 1991 at Kabwata Primary School in Lusaka, where he obtained a Grade Seven Certificate. Between 1998 and 2002, he went to Mukasa Minor Seminary School in Choma, where he completed his junior and high school education.

In 2003, Fr. Mwepya was accepted at Emmaus for his propaedeutic year to begin his seminary formation towards priesthood. From 2004 to 2006, he studied at St. Augustine Major Seminary, where he obtained a Diploma in Philosophy and religious studies and languages. He attended St. Dominick Major Seminary from 2006 to 2011, where he obtained a Bachelor Degree in the Divinities. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Lusaka on June 11, 2011. He served as assistant pastor for St. John Parish in Kabwe until July 2016, when he joined the Society of St. Sulpice.

Among other studies he has pursued psychosocial and child counseling at the University Teaching Hospital from 2013 to 2014. He obtained a certificate in Teaching Methodology at the Teachers Vocational Training College, Lusanya, in 2015.

Edward loves playing soccer, basketball, and volleyball. He treasures reading novels, motivational books, and traveling—especially to new places. Edward hopes to major in Canon Law, and later Moral Theology and Pastoral Counseling.

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The members of the U.S. Province gathered for our community retreat at the Bethany Center in Lutz, Florida, from May 27 to June 1, 2017. The Retreat Director was Msgr. Michael Heher, pastor of Saint Anne’s parish in Seal Beach, California, in the Diocese of Orange. The theme of the retreat was “A Life, Not an Example.”

Msgr. Heher was one of the regular presenters on priestly spirituality for our Vatican II Institute, which was held at St. Patrick’s Seminary in Menlo Park, California. He is the author of *The Lost Art of Walking on Water* (Paulist Press), a popular book on spirituality in the priesthood.

After an opening conference on the retreat theme itself, Msgr. Heher developed in the following days five other topics: Undeceiving Ourselves, Confessing, More than Nice Guys, How Jesus Preached, and By Means of Our Hands. Msgr. Heher is an effective pastor. He drew upon his own experience of the demands of priestly ministry to give us a pastor’s perspective on the life of the priest that was both inspiring and challenging.

In addition to our conferences, we engaged in diverse communal prayer forms. Members celebrating significant anniversaries presided and preached at our Eucharistic liturgies, Liturgy of the Hours, the Sulpician lectio, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and a memorial service remembering the four Sulpicians who died since our last retreat. On the last day of the retreat, we had a simple ritual of welcome within the Eucharistic liturgy to celebrate four new candidates, three temporary members, and one definitive member. After the retreat ended, the community enjoyed a festive dinner at the Sacred Pepper Restaurant in Tampa where we continued to share fraternity in a private dining room.

Our final day at the Bethany Center was devoted to ongoing education and provincial business. Dr. Paul Ashton, PsyD, a consultant to diocesan priests and religious communities, began the day with a presentation on managing stress. In the afternoon, our former provincial, Fr. Tom Ulshafer, PSS, gave a presentation on Fr. Olier’s vision of the Sulpician mission. Our current provincial, Fr. John Kemper, PSS, held a business session on issues facing the community, and then we broke into small groups to count our blessings and to name our hopes that are opening for us as a result of our Sulpician heritage left behind in our history at St. Patrick’s Seminary.

In short, the week was overwhelmingly well-received. We were spiritually enriched and fraternally renewed not only through the conferences and prayer times, but also by the socializing and the peaceful environment of the Bethany Center.

For us Sulpicians who share a common vision, mission, and ministry but live so far apart, this week is precious. It gives us an opportunity to strengthen bonds of fraternity among confreres gathered from east and west and the in-between of this country, as well as from our Zambian Region a half a world away.

Richard M. Gula, PSS
Director of Personnel
Almost 500 friends and supporters joined the Sulpician Fathers at St. Patrick’s Seminary & University on the morning of May 13, 2017. They gathered to celebrate our 118 years of service to the Church of the West Coast and to wish us farewell as we move on to the next phase of our mission. The event began in the Main Chapel with a Prayer Service presided by myself, Fr. Gladstone Stevens, the outgoing Rector.

Fr. John Kemper, our Provincial Superior, offered a beautiful reflection during the course of the Liturgy. He reminded all of us of the significant contributions made by the Sulpicians in shaping the Church of the Western region through the formation and education of its priests. Fr. Kemper illustrated the distinctively Sulpician character of this work by calling to mind three former rectors of St. Patrick’s and the challenges they confronted. He made it clear that this Sulpician identity is what has allowed us to confront these challenges and that, unfortunately, we find ourselves unable, in the current climate of the Archdiocese, to maintain this historic tradition.

The prayer service included an original musical setting for the “Prayer of Father Olier.” It was composed by two seminarians, Christopher Kanowitz and Timothy Donovan. They are now serving as priests in the dioceses of Reno and Orange, respectively. Their initiative, talent, and generosity embodied all that the Sulpicians have tried to instill in those men entrusted to us over the last century.

After prayer, a magnificent luncheon was served in front of the Seminary. We were privileged to hear from three different speakers. Mr. Donald C. Carroll of the St. Joseph Alumni Association, Fr. Robert McCann, and Deacon (now Fr.) Christopher Kanowitz each reflected on how the Society of St. Sulpice affected their lives. All used the occasion to express their profound gratitude for our presence and work.

While there was a sense of sadness and loss, the overall spirit of the day was one of hope. It was a time when we could say goodbye to our friends and acknowledge our good work with a dignity befitting the gentlemen of St. Sulpice. It was also an opportunity to recommit ourselves to our mission and to move towards that future God intends for us.

Thanks to all who made this event possible. This day would not have been possible without the hard work of a number of people. Carleen Kramer and Fr. Kemper coordinated from the East Coast and Leelamma Sebastian was crucial in organizing details at St. Patrick’s. All of the Sulpician Fathers leaving this venerable institution would like to express our appreciation to all those who supported us in this difficult time.

Gladstone Stevens, PSS
Rector of St. Patrick’s (2014–2017)
Sulpicians at St. Patrick’s, left to right: Jaime E. Robledo, PSS, Vincent D. Bui, PSS, Gladstone H. Stevens, PSS, Inniah Christy T. Arockiaraj, PSS, Paul A. Maillet, PSS, and Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS.

“The warm welcome of local professors, priests, lay women and men to form a comprehensive faculty, has achieved for over a hundred years an institution that has sent out for ordination over two thousand priests and forty-three bishops and one cardinal.”

—Fr. Robert McCann

Adieu
Renato J. Lopez, PSS

I have to admit that writing this short report on my sabbatical year was not the most appealing to me. But I gave my word to Update that I would meet the deadline—today. It also happens to be the last day of my time away from a Sulpician assignment. Perhaps the gracious God is using even my indolence to tell me something. Today, like on no other day, I can look back on the sabbatical year I am leaving behind and at the same time look forward to my new placement.

As I survey the past twelve months, my heart is filled with gratitude to God. I traveled. I did a six-week program at Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem, during which I met the most wonderful people. I preached retreats and recollections, said masses in village chapels and grand churches, and renewed contact with family and friends.

But I am most grateful for the time I spent in my hometown in the Philippines. I did several improvements on my home there and renovated my grandparents' house. The experience gave me the satisfaction of seeing quantifiable results—an indulgence that formation work does not grant easily. The compliments of relatives and friends were effusive. I should now be all content with my creative work. But I am not. I miss the joys of study and teaching, the mysterious pleasure of walking with seminarians in their difficult journey of discernment, and the holy delight of breaking the Word and Bread with them.

As I look forward to a new assignment, I have some apprehensions. I guess that comes naturally with the prospect of a new community with a different culture, requiring new learning and adjustment. But I am going back to formation work with a renewed sense of my own priesthood. Being in my hometown has led me back to the origins of my vocation—to my experience of a deeply believing Church whose struggle with its own brokenness has not prevented it from the joy of believing that God’s goodness triumphs over our every unfaithfulness. And a no mean part of the retrieval of my “early love” was the privilege of being together with my mother for almost three months—the longest time I have spent with her since I left for high school seminary at the age of thirteen! More than ever now I am convinced that I owe my vocation to her and to her Church, their faith, their prayer, their love. Her Church is gray and wrinkled now, it has many aches and pains; it is learning to embrace death itself. But its Spirit is ever young and always giving birth to new life—because it does not know despair. It only knows love. I am deeply embarrassed in many ways I have failed her Church—by my lack of courage, my flailing commitment, my pride in thinking that I have outgrown it, my foolishness in feeling that I am better than it is. In the end, I can only love my mother as I can love her Church. And if my sabbatical year only gave me that realization, I would be willing to go through it again.

Thomas R. Hurst, PSS

In the book of Leviticus, chapter 25, God calls Israel to observe a rest period of one year after six years of work. Forty years ago, the U.S. Province of the Sulpicians followed this direction of God and implemented a sabbatical program, although they added an extra year of work. This sabbatical policy of rest and renewal has been a blessing for individual Sulpicians as well as the Province and its institutions. It has given new life and energy to the individual and new or renewed focus upon his return to seminary ministry.

I have been blessed this past academic year to enjoy a sabbatical after fourteen years of ministry as a rector in two of our seminaries. This year has had a threefold emphasis of rest, depth, and next steps. After almost a decade and a half of leadership and administration, I needed time for rest and relaxation in order to regain energy and attend to my health. At the same time, I wanted to gain depth in my academic areas of interest, especially Syriac patristics and New Testament Christology. Since I would turn seventy during my sabbatical, I also wanted to identify some goals for the next stage of my life and ministry.

I have been fortunate to make progress in all three areas. I have worked on better eating habits along with daily exercise. I also have been able to regain my abilities in the Syriac language and literature that I had specialized in during graduate school. I have been able to make substantial progress in a translation of a lengthy hymn about the Blessed Mother by a sixth century Syriac church father. At the same time, I have also been able to do serious reading in literature pertaining to New Testament Christology.

As I now complete my twelve months of renewal, I look forward to returning with renewed energy to part-time teaching at St. Mary’s Seminary, Roland Park, in patristics and scripture. I will also continue weekend liturgical ministry in local parishes as well as membership on some boards of trustees.

I am deeply grateful for the support of the Province during these months of sabbatical and look forward to continuing my priestly ministry in seminary formation.

Thank you, Fr. Menniti


Fr. Menniti was a native of Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania, and a priest of the Diocese of Harrisburg. He began his seminary journey at St. Charles College Seminary in Catonsville, Maryland. To say that he was a “life-long learner” would be a massive understatement.

Following ordination, he earned his S.T.L. from the Gregorian University in Rome. While serving in full-time parochial ministry, he earned a doctorate in Psychology (Ph.D.) from The Catholic University and later, in 1973, he successfully completed a law degree (J.D.) from American University.

He served as a priest for more than 60 years until his death on April 9, 2015. The Sulpicians are thankful to Fr. Menniti for remembering our mission of initial and ongoing formation of priests. Fr. Dan Menniti began his road to the priesthood in a Sulpician seminary and expressed his gratitude often, including his last gift, his bequest. It was once said that a bequest gift is “Seeing into the future with the eyes of faith.” We are grateful that his gift enables us to prepare other men for priesthood. Requiescat in pace!

† † †

Consider a Legacy Gift: “Seeing into the future with eyes of faith”

Please remember the Society of St. Sulpice in your estate plans. Your thoughtful legacy gift can help us care for our future. Legacy gifts can be made to:
• Senior Sulpicians
• Mission Seminary (Africa)
• Historic Site – Paca Street
• Education of New Members

To learn more about a Legacy Gift, contact Carleen Kramer, Executive Assistant to the Provincial and Advancement Coordinator at 810-323-5070.
For the past two years, Fr. Robert Cro has worked as a Sulpician Candidate at Theological College in Washington, D.C., helping young men discern their vocations and prepare for ordained ministry in the Church. Now, at the request of the Provincial Council, it’s his turn to prepare.

Fr. Cro, who was admitted to the Society of St. Sulpice as a temporary member this spring, is spending the summer in Assisi where he is learning Italian. He will put this knowledge to good use in the fall when he begins studies for a Licentiate in the History of the Church (H.E.L.) at the Gregorian University in Rome.

This field is not entirely new to him. Fr. Cro always has loved history, and once trained as an archaeologist with a special focus on later antiquity and the early Christian era. Indeed, during his upcoming studies he hopes to pursue some of those earlier interests, especially the history of Rome’s transition from a pagan capital to a Christian one.

Fr. Cro, however, is not pursuing these studies simply out of personal interest. His principal goal, rather, is that of the Sulpicians as a whole: To better form men for service as priests of Jesus Christ. A proper understanding of history is essential for such service, especially in a climate when many seek to color or appropriate the Church’s past in order to advance partisan agendas. It also offers an essential source of inspiration and reflection, allowing us to see our Lord’s grace unfold in human history. As a Sulpician Fr. Cro hopes to share this profound richness with the next generation of priests.

In December 2016, the Provincial Council promoted me to temporary membership and graduate studies at the Accademia Alfonsiana at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome. I will pursue a license in moral theology while residing at the Pontifical Canadian College with fellow U.S. Province temporary members Frs. Robert Cro and Peter Kwaleyela.

Of particular interest to me is the area of social ethics, especially the topic of immigration and the movement of peoples.

I spent part of my seminary studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University while a student at the Pontifical North American College in Rome in the late 1990s. So, while this will not be my first time studying in Rome, I am excited for this opportunity to further my education for service in the Society of St. Sulpice.

As all of the classes at the Alfonsiana are taught in Italian, I spent part of the Spring 2017 semester in a refresher course in Italian at the Center for Italian Studies at the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore. This summer, I am enrolled in a month-long Italian language program in Arlington, Virginia, as well as another four-week program at the Accademia Dante Alighieri in Florence prior to the beginning of the first semester on October 2.

Senior staff attended Ashley Addiction Treatment’s 10th Anniversary Mae Abraham Legacy Luncheon on May 17 in Baltimore. Ashley Addiction Treatment is a nationally renowned facility established 34 years ago by Fr. Joseph Martin, PSS, and Mae Abraham. Fr. Martin and his famous “Chalk Talk” lectures continue to have a strong presence in homes and treatment centers everywhere to this day. Fr. Martin died in 2009.

Following the Sulpician retreat in Florida, several of the young Sulpician Candidates from Zambia were treated by Rev. Brian Carpenter, also a Candidate, to a visit to Disney World theme parks.
Announcing New Sulpician Resources

The Province has been especially blessed this past year with three valuable resources of Sulpician history and spirituality. Last summer’s Update announced the release of the historical work by Fr. Thomas Ulshafer, PSS: *The Life and Times of Francois-Charles Nagot*, PSS, *Founding Superior of the Sulpicians in the U.S.* This work put into historical context the mind, the manner, and the man of the first Sulpician superior in the U.S. and Baltimore.

This summer we are happy to announce the release of two more valuable resources. In *A Primer on Sulpician Spirituality*, Fr. Mel Blanchette, PSS, explains the principal components of Sulpician spirituality and its roots in the French School of spirituality—a reform movement of seventeenth-century France, still little known in the Catholic world, but one that rejuvenated Catholic faith by responding to the call for internal renewal by the Council of Trent in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. Each chapter grew out of his Rector’s conferences prepared for the seminarians of Theological College of The Catholic University of America. After an introduction to the French School and its appropriation by Jean-Jacques Olier, the founder of the Sulpicians, Fr. Blanchette devotes a chapter each to the six components of Sulpician spirituality: the Eucharist, Scripture as the Word of God, prayer, spiritual direction, the cross, and the role of the Virgin Mary. In making his interpretation and application, he draws upon his fifty years of ministry with the Sulpicians to mine the rich content of these themes of the French School and to show how they resonate today with potential to reinvigorate our spirituality.

The third resource, *Jean-Jacques Olier (1605–1657)*, is from our French confrenre, Fr. Bernard Pitaud, PSS, a recognized specialist on Olier and the French School of Spirituality. This is the most comprehensive biography of the founder of the Society of St. Sulpice. It is presently only available in French. Fr. Larry Terrien, PSS, is devoting his sabbatical year to translating this masterful work so that it will be accessible to the English-speaking world.

Together, these books of Frs. Ulshafer, Blanchette, and Pitaud provide excellent resources to introduce the newer members of the Society and today’s seminarians to the riches of this enduring tradition. But beyond this specialized audience, these books also provide inspiration, guidance, and enrichment to anyone seeking to revitalize their own spirituality as well as the spiritual life of the Church today, especially in light of the Second Vatican Council and the focus of the papacy of Francis.

Richard M. Gula, PSS
Director of Personnel

In Memoriam
Addison Wright, PSS
June 28, 1932–Jan. 31, 2017

As a Sulpician candidate, he served for one year (1957–1958) on the high school faculty of St. Edward’s Seminary, Kenmore, Washington, where he taught Religion, English, and History. He then went for another year to join the faculty at St. John’s Provincial Seminary, Plymouth, Michigan, (1958-1959) to teach Fundamental Theology and Hebrew. After completing Solitude (1959–1960), he was admitted to the Society of St. Sulpice in 1960.

He was on the faculty of St. Mary’s Seminary & University from 1963 to 1968 where he taught Patrology, Scripture, Hebrew, and Archeology. Then, while serving as rector of St. John’s Provincial Seminary, Plymouth, Michigan, from 1968 to 1971, he also taught Scripture and Hebrew. After a difficult term as rector and the withdrawal of the Sulpicians from the seminary there, Fr. Wright left St. John’s disenchanted with the administrative and formational aspects of seminary life. From then on, he basically limited his Sulpician ministry to making an academic contribution to the seminary and spent the rest of his career teaching Scripture in a variety of settings. From 1971 to 1981, he taught Scripture again at St. Mary’s in Baltimore.


Fr. Wright found the wisdom of Qoheleth confirmed in his own experience, namely, that living in a world beyond human control is not an easy task. Yet the experience of joy in doing what he loved sustained him to fully engage life for his own sake and for those he served.

Richard M. Gula, PSS, Director of Personnel
Provincial’s Message
(Continued from p. 1)

world’s priests to stay close to the marginalized and to bring the healing power of God’s grace to everyone. Today’s newly ordained are responding to the Pope’s challenge when they go out of themselves and get involved in the messiness of life where they can be heralds of the Good News, conduits of God’s grace, and reconcilers in a fractured world.

Each summer, as Provincial, I attend a few ordinations. I am truly pleased by the quality of men that we have been privileged to form in the Sulpician tradition. I find them to be enlivened by the sacred scriptures, as Fr. Olier, the founder of the Sulpicians, would hope they would be, and I find them committed to being a voice for the marginalized, as Pope Francis wants them to be. Indeed, I am impressed by the newly ordained priests formed in our Sulpician seminaries.

Recently I read of Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, imparting his wisdom to the next generation of leaders by saying, “Done is better than perfect ... we need to embody an optimistic culture, and lastly, a strong team of co-workers enables you to take risks and make mistakes, and, most importantly, to learn from the mistakes.”

This wisdom is also at work in our recently ordained. Even though they would be the first to recite their litany of short-comings, they have learned to live with imperfection by trusting in the gifts which they do have and in the collective wisdom of those with whom they will collaborate in ministry. Our newly ordained are ready to step boldly into pastoral ministry motivated by faith and enlivened by the courage that only the Holy Spirit can inspire.

As we welcome our new priests formed in the spirit of Father Olier and under the inspiration of Pope Francis, we wish them all the best and offer our pledge of fraternal support.