



# Update

The Sulpicians, Province of the US

Volume 1, 2024



## Provincial's Message

Daniel F. Moore, PSS

### Wicked

The current national revival of the Broadway musical, *Wicked*, the story of *Elphaba*, the green witch of the West who resides somewhere over the rainbow—is primarily a story about insiders and outsiders. The clever creator of *Wicked* reimagines the classic children's tale, *The Wizard of Oz*, in grown-up psycho-political terms. In the guise of a fairy tale, a satire—reflecting upon real life racial tensions and prejudices—emerges.

The musical, *Wicked*, presumably a story of witches and wizards, is rather a story about personalities and prejudices, of inclusion and exclusion—based upon perceived differences and similarities—first among young adults in a college dorm; and then more generally among the inhabitants of Oz, both human

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## McGivney Propaedeutic House of Formation

We are in the midst of preparing for the inaugural year of the McGivney House propaedeutic program. As you are doubtless aware, the new PPF 6th Edition calls for an initial year of seminary formation in which the seminarian is introduced to priestly formation and begins to acquire and demonstrate the basic habits of prayer, study, and social life that will enable him both to make a sound discernment regarding his desire to be a priest and to benefit from the subsequent stages of priestly formation.

Although like all seminaries McGivney House helps men develop in all four of the dimensions of priestly formation, our program has a number of distinctive features. First, McGivney House is an intentionally small and close-knit community. We will have two full-time priest-formators, Fr. James Yeakel, OSFS, and me, and a maximum of twelve seminarians. Everyone has their own rooms, of course, but we will be spending a large portion of every week with each other. The closer quarters of propaedeutic daily life will help the men achieve one of the main goals of the propaedeutic, which is to learn how to be more mindful of the needs of their housemates, practice self-control, and serve others.

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Cover image: Lewis Contractors at the McGivney House site.



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**Fr. Moore and the team of contractors reviewing the progress, and next steps in the construction of The Father McGivney House at Paca Street.**

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Second, the human formation dimension of the propaedeutic places significant emphasis on the men becoming more aware of the people and events in their past that have influenced them. They will have weekly, and in the introductory period even daily, sessions devoted to helping them understand and articulate their interior affective movements. They will practice techniques designed to help them manage grief, anger, and fear and to express both criticism and approval in fruitful and respectful ways. They will be encouraged to develop good habits with respect to nutrition and physical health, including learning basic cooking skills, and they will also be assisted in perfecting their basic social skills.

Third, the spiritual dimension of the propaedeutic is both broad and deep. It is broad, insofar as the seminarian will be put in touch with the range of key figures and schools of Catholic spirituality—from the monastics, such as Saints Anthony and Benedict, the Latin Fathers, such as St. Augustine, the mendicants St. Francis and St. Dominic, the Carmelites, St. Ignatius of Loyola, and the French School. It will be deep, insofar as the seminarian will develop his habits of

daily liturgical participation, spiritual reading, meditation, and silence. The McGivney House also takes up the PPF’s encouragement to practice pilgrimages by visiting local and regional holy sites. We plan to conclude the year with a Marian pilgrimage in France that will connect the seminarians with powerful witnesses to the faith and connect them with the significant French roots of the American Catholic Church.

The intellectual dimension focuses on providing the new seminarians with a solid foundation in the Catholic faith. It includes the weekly classes in spirituality and human development. It also includes a weekly class introducing them to the reading of the Scriptures, with an emphasis on understanding the arc of salvation history, and a weekly class introducing them to Catholic theological and moral doctrine. The classes are not part of a degree program, are graded pass/fail, and are meant to support the human and spiritual development that is the primary aim of the propaedeutic.

The pastoral dimension of McGivney’s propaedeutic program utilizes initiatives of the Archdiocese of Baltimore to put the seminarians in contact with the urban poor. They will then learn how to reflect theologically on their experiences,

support each other, and become more aware both of the needs of others and their own strengths and weaknesses. The seminarians will also learn more about how dioceses work in general and the distinctive history and pastoral needs of their own dioceses.

Shawn D. Gould, PSS, Director,  
McGivney Propaedeutic House of Formation

# 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](http://www.sulpicians.org).

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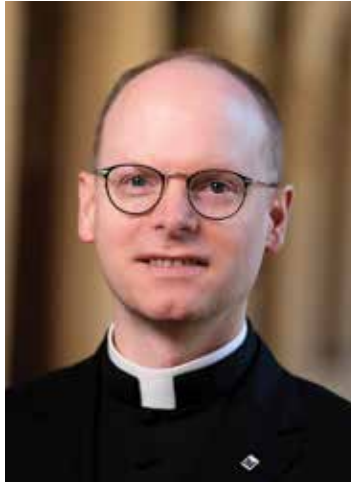
  
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# McGivney Propaedeutic House of Formation Team

## Rev. Shawn D. Gould, PSS, Director

Fr. Shawn Gould, PSS, is a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago and a member of the Priests of the Society of St. Sulpice. Raised as a Presbyterian in Grand Haven, Michigan, Fr. Gould entered the Catholic Church while practicing law in Milwaukee. After moving to a large firm in Chicago, Fr. Gould discerned a call to the diocesan priesthood and entered Mundelein Seminary in 2005.

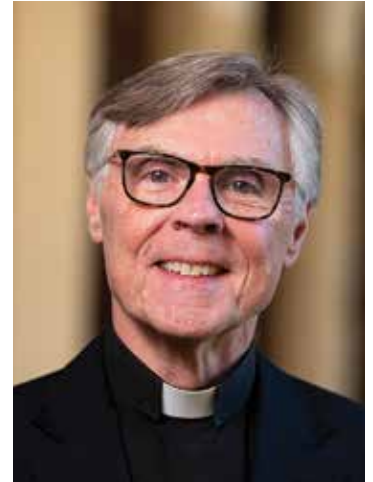


After ordination in 2010, Fr. Gould first served as Associate Pastor and Temporary Administrator of St. Alphonsus Parish in Chicago, particularly working with its large young adult population. He then served as Pastor of St. Bede Parish, Ingleside, strengthening the parish school's finances, and shepherding the parish through a capital campaign and the Archdiocese's "Renew My Church" re-organization of parishes. Released to the Society of St. Sulpice as a candidate in 2018, Fr. Gould served on the faculty of St. Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore, where he taught courses in the systematics and pre-theology departments, provided spiritual direction, and was a formator. After becoming a member of the Society in 2021, he was assigned to doctoral studies at the Angelicum and is presently completing a dissertation under the direction of Fr. Thomas Joseph White, O.P., comparing a dimension of St. Thomas Aquinas's Christology to that of Fr. Jean-Jacques Olier, the founder of the Sulpicians.

BA (1998), University of Notre Dame  
JD (2001), University of California at Berkeley School of Law  
MDiv, STB (2010), STL (2014), University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, IL  
STD (cand.), Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum), Rome

## Rev. James R. Yeakel, OSFS, Coordinator

Fr. James Yeakel, OSFS, PhD, is a priest, an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales, and a licensed clinical social worker. After professing final vows in 1977, he was ordained a priest in 1979. He completed his formal education at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia, earning a Ph.D. in clinical social work.



Fr. Yeakel has ministered in a variety of pastoral settings. He was the Director of Pastoral Studies at the De Sales School of Theology and taught as an adjunct professor at the Washington Theological Union and at Catholic University of America. As a licensed clinical social worker, he ministered on the staff of Catholic Charities in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and in Washington, D.C.

He later served as an inpatient and outpatient therapist at St. Luke Institute. He was Director of Pastoral Care at St. Mary's Hospital, Richmond, Virginia, and later, at St. Vincent's Hospital, a psychiatric facility in Harrison, New York.

He served as a certified supervisor, member, and past chair of The National Association of Catholic Chaplains Certification Commission. He has served as the Director of Formation for the Wilmington/Philadelphia Province of the Oblates, as an Associate Pastor in Vienna, Virginia, and Philadelphia, and most recently, as Pastor of Immaculate Conception/St. Jude parish in Elkton, Maryland.

BA (1975), De Sales University  
MA (1978), De Sales School of Theology, Washington, D.C.  
MSW (1980), Catholic University of America  
PhD (1997), Virginia Commonwealth University



### Built Upon a Long and Faithful Tradition

Efforts to renovate and expand the former convent on the grounds of the original St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore continue to progress with the opening in the Summer of 2024.

Leading the project is Tyler Tate, Lewis Contractors and David Gaudreau, EwingCole Architects.

# A Fraternal Visit to the United States (Middle Atlantic Coast)



**Top: Fr. Shayne E. M. Craig (fourth from left) with faculty of Theological College. Middle: Fr. Craig addresses those present at Theological College. Lower left: Fr. Daniel F Moore, Fr. Craig, and Fr. Richard M Gula**



**T**he US Province welcomed the Very Rev. Shayne E. M. Craig, PSS, Superior General to the Baltimore-Washington region from November 6 to 16, 2023. Fr. Craig's visit is not an official visitation, but rather a fraternal one—one that also includes visiting historic sites, both religious and civic. As he has not visited the United States previously (except San Antonio, Texas), his visit was divided broadly.

The Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, The Basilica of the Assumption, St. Mary's Historic Site on Paca Street, Villa Olier, Our Lady of the Angels Chapel, and the Sulpician cemetery were the sites visited in Baltimore.

High on Fr. Craig's priorities were visits to the seminaries, particularly St. Mary's Seminary & University and Theological College, where he was the presider and homilist at the seminary's community Mass. He visited other Sulpician Institutions, including the Provincial House, and Dubourg House. During these visits, Fr. Craig met with Sulpician confreres, colleagues, and seminarians.

He attended the St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute Dunning Lecture and panel discussion marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Fr. Raymond E. Brown, PSS, a revered 20th century biblical scholar.

In Washington, DC, he visited the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, The Catholic University of America, St. Matthew's Cathedral, The Capitol, The National Mall, museums, and environs.

On November 13, during the annual November US Bishops' Plenary Meetings in Baltimore, Fr. Craig attended a special dinner hosted by St. Mary's Seminary & University, Theological College, and St. Luke Institute, at a local restaurant at the Inner Harbor area with confreres, and rectors from both seminaries present, as well as several archbishops and bishops.



“I was very happy to finally be able to visit my American confrères, and to see in person these places so central to our mission in the Church in the United States. As ever, I am amazed at how much good is done by so few people! It is truly a sign of the Lord working a miracle of multiplication! When we give what we have, for him to work with, he makes it enough and more than enough. May that same childlike audacity, which was at the heart of Monsieur Olier's project, always be the spirit that guides his Sulpician sons.”





## Fr. Gladstone H. “Bud” Stevens appointed Rector of Theological College

At the Theological College opening Mass on August 27, 2024, Fr. Gladstone “Bud” Stevens, PSS, PhD, was installed as the eighteenth rector of Theological College of The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. Cardinal Wilton Gregory, Archbishop of Washington, presided over a Mass, which was honored by 26 concelebrants, among whom were former TC rectors Fr. Lawrence Terrien, PSS, and Fr. Mel Blanchette, PSS. Fr. Ronald Witherup, PSS, attended as Fr. Daniel F. Moore’s provincial representative, given his absence due to his sister’s recent death. Fr. Witherup offered opening remarks and later introduced Fr. Stevens as an excellent, highly qualified candidate for rector to Cardinal Gregory, who confirmed the proceedings.

After leading the congregation in the Profession of Faith and pronouncing and signing the Oath of Fidelity as rector, Fr. Stevens offered remarks inspired by a surprise gift he received that morning from his sisters, Pamela Stevens and Dr. Sandra Stevens, who attended the installation. “Pelagianism is the most pernicious of all heresies precisely because it denies the absolute necessity for grace. The gift of a new *Liturgy of the Hours* from my sisters reminded me that everything in ministry must begin with, be sustained by, and lead to ever deeper prayerful encounters with Christ. The work of priestly formation begins with Christ’s compassion upon the crowd who were like sheep without a shepherd. The whole work of the seminary must be an extension of the Lord’s compassion and His promise that He would send them shepherds.

Fr. Stevens, a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Kentucky, was ordained in 2000, and joined the

Sulpicians in 2002. He is a member of the Provincial Council of the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States, and is the First Consultor. A native of Connecticut, he was raised in Nashville, Tennessee. He graduated from Quincy College in Illinois in 1989, and earned a doctorate in theology from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1997. His specialization is systematic theology, and he regularly teaches courses on the priesthood, and the Eucharist.

Fr. Stevens has served on the formation and academic faculties of St. Mary’s Seminary and University in Baltimore, Maryland, and as its academic dean, praeses, and vice rector. He also served on the formation and academic faculties of St. Patrick’s Seminary in Menlo Park, California and as academic dean, vice rector and rector. He was a member of the committee that composed the Sixth Edition of the

Program for Priestly Formation for the United States. He is a highly regarded retreat and convocation leader for priests. He also regularly assists in parishes, celebrating liturgies and giving conferences. He is a chaplain for the Order of Malta.



Top: Fr. Stevens. Above: Fr. Stevens with Cardinal Wilton Gregory.



## Blessing of *Advent* Sculpture and Garden at Theological College

**On** May 17, 2023, Cardinal Wilton Gregory, Archbishop of Washington, blessed the new National Life Monument, titled *Advent*, created by world renowned Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz. The statue is situated in the Bleichner Sculpture Garden on the grounds of Theological College at the intersection of 4th Street and Michigan Avenue. The garden was a gift from the Sulpician Fathers—dedicated to deceased (December 14, 2022) former TC rector, Rev. Howard Bleichner, PSS—in honor of their confrères, colleagues, and alumni. The sculpture itself was a gift from patrons Michael and Carole Ritchie, in thanksgiving for mothers and the gift of life.

Fr. Daniel F. Moore, PSS, Provincial Superior of the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States, who hosted the dedication ceremony, said,

*Advent* conveys an immediate understanding of joy, hope, expectancy, and promise—liturgically, theologically, and humanly. The sculpture, titled simply *Advent*, conveys a hidden depth, which the faithful will not fail to appreciate. *Advent* is the “God-bearer,” the modern *Theotokos*. The artistry and design evoke multiple responses. Her simple name, *Advent*, moves us beyond the immediate, the present, to the past—and our future—grace filled realities and possibilities. We humans, we the faithful, live in ‘advent,’ i.e., expectancy and hope! While acknowledged as the National Life Monument, *Advent*, as a pregnant Madonna, transcends bronze, revealing a deeper significance, deeper truths of God, and humanity; and His love for each of us.

Throughout his career, Fr. Howard Bleichner, PSS, was universally acclaimed as an excellent lecturer.

Fr. Bleichner was the master of the metaphor. As an administrator in his two terms as rector,\* he was straightforward and willing to face difficult matters. He was respected by Church leaders.

Fr. Thomas R. Hurst, PSS, remembered him as an inspired preacher: “Howard took seriously the words of St. Paul to Timothy, . . . proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is inconvenient or convenient; convince, reprimand, encourage. . . .” (2 Tim 4:2). His good friend, Fr. Robert F. Leavitt, PSS, reflected on Howard the priest. “Inside the formidable public person was a sensitive even shy spiritual man. He prayed and recited the Mass Prayers with a deep inner devotion to the mystery. There was a calm and contemplative spirit about him.”

\* 1978–1988: St. Patrick’s Seminary, Menlo Park, California; 1992–2002: Theological College, Washington, DC



**Top: Cardinal Wilton Gregory blesses the new sculpture. Above: Sculptor Timothy Schmalz (left) and Fr. Daniel Moore, PSS.**



# Dunning Lecture Commemorates Raymond E. Brown, PSS



The Ecumenical Institute panel included, from left: Dr. Rebecca Hancock, Dr. Michael J. Gorman, Fr. Robert F. Leavitt, PSS, Fr. Frank J. Matera, Fr. Ronald D. Witherup, PSS, and Fr. John R. Donahue, SJ.

The annual Dunning Lecture sponsored by the Ecumenical Institute of St. Mary's Seminary & University took place on November 8, 2023. The lecturer was noted biblical scholar Fr. Frank J. Matera, Andrews-Kelly-Ryan Emeritus Professor of The Catholic University of America. The title of his lecture was "Preaching from the Cross: A Reflection on Paul's Theology of Preaching," also the topic for his latest forthcoming book.

A special highlight of this year's Dunning Lecture was its commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the death of world-renowned Sulpician Scripture scholar, Fr. Raymond E. Brown.

Fr. Brown, who had begun his illustrious career in biblical studies at St. Mary's, died suddenly on August 8, 1998, leaving an enormous legacy in his multiple publications, especially in the areas of the Johannine literature, the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke, and the passion narratives of the Gospels, analyzed in his monumental two-volume *Death of the Messiah* (1994).

Fr. Matera paid homage to the influence of Fr. Brown in his own scholarship and, more broadly, in biblical scholarship the world over. In addition to the lecture, Fr. Matera participated in an afternoon panel discussion of Fr. Brown's scholarly influence,

which was held for the combined faculties of the School of Theology and the Ecumenical Institute. Other panel members included Fr. John R. Donahue, SJ, the first Raymond E. Brown Professor at SMSU, Dr. Michael J. Gorman, the current holder of the Raymond E. Brown Chair at SMSU, Fr. Robert F. Leavitt, PSS, a former student of Fr. Brown's, and Fr. Ronald D. Witherup, PSS, former Sulpician Superior General.

Dr. Brent Laytham and Dr. Rebecca Hancock, respectively, Dean and Associate Dean of the EI, coordinated and introduced the entire program, which was also live-streamed.

Ronald D. Witherup, PSS



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## Fr. Melvin C. Blanchette, PSS, Receives Papal Honor

Fr. Melvin “Mel” C. Blanchette, PSS, PhD, was awarded the Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice Cross on September 23, 2023, by Archbishop William E. Lori at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore. Throughout decades of priestly ministry to the Church, Fr. Blanchette, a member of the Society of the Priests of St. Sulpice since 1972, is a well-known author, psychologist, and counselor. Fr. Blanchette positively affected and strengthened the ongoing human and spiritual formation of countless priests, religious, and seminarians throughout the United States and Canada.

Whether ministering to seminarians, priests and religious as a seminary formator, spiritual director, mentor, or retreat director, and later as the rector of Theological College, the National Seminary at The Catholic University of America (2007–2011), Fr. Blanchette has been a positive influence on many lives.

Described as a deeply dedicated and thoughtful priest, Fr. Mel commented, “When Archbishop Lori called me with the news, I was deeply honored and humbled to learn that I was chosen by the Holy Father to receive this award. It is such a wonderful feeling to receive this recognition for serving the Holy Father and the Church.”

Fr. Daniel F. Moore, PSS, Provincial, added, “We offer our heartiest congratulations to our confrere as a recipient of the **Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice** medal. We are grateful for Mel’s faithful ministry in initial and ongoing formation and for his dedication to the Society and to the Church. Fr. Moore accompanied Fr. Blanchette at the dinner hosted by Archbishop Lori for the papal honorees at his residence the Friday evening prior the presentation of honors, which were conferred the following morning at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen.

## Fr. Thomas R. Ulshafer, PSS, Retires as General Treasurer of the Society



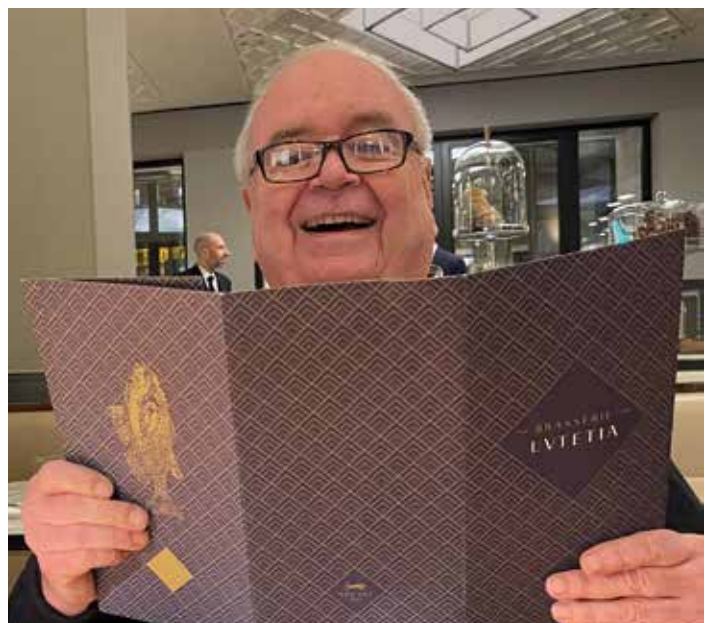
After many years of service (2016–2023), Fr. Thomas R. Ulshafer, PSS, informed Very Rev. Shayne Craig, PSS, Superior General of The Priests of St. Sulpice, his desire to step down from the position of General Treasurer for the Society.

During his time as Treasurer, significant work has been done regarding investments, to ensure the economic stability of the Generalate.

Significant work was also done to build up the FIER (fund for the instruction, formation, and retirement), as well as to recognize and protect the patrimony, by way of improving the Archives (with projects to improve the physical housing of the Archives, the undertaking of their digitization, the improvement of personnel services, etc.).

Fr. Robert J. Cro, PSS, was nominated and approved as the new General Treasurer effective January 1, 2024. Fr. Cro has a background in Classical Archeology and is an alumnus of St. Mary’s Seminary & University in Baltimore. He has a licentiate in Church History from the Pontifical Gregorian University. Currently, Fr. Cro is the Coordinator of Human Formation and Dean of Men at Theological College of The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. He is a member of the Province Finance Committee.

At the conclusion of December 2023 General Council meetings in Paris, which included the three provincials, the general treasurer, and his successor, Fr. Daniel Moore, PSS, US Provincial Superior, hosted a celebratory dinner to congratulate Fr. Ulshafer for his many years of service as general treasurer. The US confreres attending the meetings in Paris joined the host and honoree at a well-regarded brasserie chosen for the event. Fr. Robert Cro was also welcomed as the new general treasurer.







# Sulpicians in Studies

## Studying Spirituality at the Angelicum

**T**he Institute of Spirituality at the Angelicum (ISA) in Rome is the oldest institute in the faculty of Theology. It's dedicated to shaping the character of the Christian's growth in holiness: *"Living the truth in love, we are called to grow in every way into him who is the head, the Christ"* (Ephesians 4:15).

The program, developed in the Dominican tradition of spiritual reflection, offers a holistic account of Christian holiness and the call to perfection. The course helps formators to deepen their understanding of spiritual theology and serves as a sabbatical with some spiritual and theological study for clergy, religious, and laity. Some of the obligatory courses included in the program are the History of Spirituality, Spiritual Direction, Christian Anthropology, Studying Spirituality and Challenge of Virtue in the Life of Grace.

At the end of the program, one is left in utter awe and appreciation of the profound richness of the Church's tradition of spirituality inspired by generations of theologians, men and women saints, and mystics who reflected on the mysteries of the Christian life and encouraged growth toward the perfection of charity and the believer's participation in the life of the trinity. Needless to mention, after only a few months, the Thomistic mind envelops the student to appreciate that truly *"the spiritual life is lived by charity!"* as the angelic doctor taught.

Fr. Neal Mulyata, PSS



## Sulpician Formation in San Antonio

**T**he Sulpician Formation Program for Candidates and Temporary Members was held in San Antonio June 5 to 13, 2023. It was an opportunity for new Sulpicians to encounter one another in an in-person format, since during the pandemic the program was conducted online. It offered a form for reflection and dialogue on topics relevant to Sulpician ministry, especially Human and Spiritual Formation. The program capitalized on presenters from the San Antonio area and the diversity of the Sulpician participants themselves: Fathers Enoch Kanjira from Malawi, Thomson Mwaba and Victor Simutonga from Zambia, and Fredrik Hansen, a native of Norway. A highlight of the week was the Pilgrimage Day: The Camino de San Antonio, which took the group to the historic markers of faith, the San Antonio Missions. The program concluded with the Mexican American Catholic College's Intercultural competence program that brought together Sulpicians and a range of others preparing for ministry.

Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS, Provincial Secretary,  
Director of Personnel & Director of Initial Formation

# M 10th Anniversary Sabbaticals

## Fr. Hy K. Nguyen, PSS

I enjoyed my sabbatical year from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023. During the initial five months, I decided to reside at St. Joseph the Worker Church in Oakland, California. While I was there, I had the opportunity to attend the diocesan retreat with the bishop and other priests of the diocese.



In January 2023, I found a retreat being offered in Israel. I had the privilege of living alongside the community of Fathers and Brothers of Charles de Foucauld in Nazareth. Witnessing their embodiment of simplicity and contemplation within the Muslim community of Nazareth, was a profound inspiration. I visited the shrine in Taybeh where St. Charles de Foucauld lived as a hermit for a period near a convent of Poor Clares. St. Charles de Foucauld was canonized by Pope Francis on May 15, 2022. I celebrated Mass at the Little Sisters of Jesus (Petites Soeurs de Jesus) in Nazareth.

I returned to the United States and resided at the Holy Family Retreat Center in Fort Worth, Texas. I spent the remainder of my sabbatical engaged in various activities, including leading retreats for Vietnamese communities in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, the Archdiocese of New Orleans, the Dioceses of Austin, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Bridgeport, and Orange, to name a few.



Charles de Foucauld shrine at Taybeh (© Custodia Terrae Sanctae)



Fr. Hy celebrates Mass at The Little Sisters of Jesus (Petites Soeurs de Jesus) in Nazareth

During May 5 to 7, 2023, I had the opportunity to preach to the Vietnamese community in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, Australia, on the occasion of Our Lady of LaVang days. I also contributed theological reflections to some Vietnamese publications and websites, and I conducted a remote class for the Grand Seminary in Hue, Vietnam, via Zoom.

The year ended swiftly. I am grateful for the council's support in giving me the opportunity. It has significantly contributed to my well-being and professional development.



Fr. Hy preaching in Melbourne, Australia



# A Roman Sabbatical

**W**as waiting more than 30 years for a sabbatical experience, following decades in administration, worth it? By all means!

For the spring semester 2023, I was privileged to spend five months in Rome as the first renewed Catholic Biblical Association (CBA) Visiting Professor at the Pontifical Biblical Institute. It was truly an amazing experience for several reasons. First, of course, was simply the reality of living in Rome for an extended period of time. Besides the cafes, trattorias, and gelato shops, there were numerous occasions for celebrations with Pope Francis, especially the beautiful services of Holy Week.

In addition, as a visiting professor at the PBI, I had contact with a wide variety of scholarly experts from around the world. Although I was asked to teach only one class—an exegetical course on Galatians—I found myself busier than anticipated. I was invited to serve on a doctoral defense team and to give a public lecture for a symposium on biblical exegesis. In addition, participating in numerous conferences, licentiate and doctoral defenses, and scholarly symposia gave me a breadth and depth of academia that I had not experienced in many years. My 31 students, moreover, from all over the world, exhibited an enthusiasm and expertise that was truly inspiring. Their questions, engagement, and cooperation were stellar.

I also benefited greatly from residing with the local Sulpician community at the Canadian Pontifical College, just adjacent to the Vatican. The Canadian Province directs this historic institution, which is also home to the Sulpician Procure, the “face” of Saint Sulpice to the Holy See. The multi-national community, whose Rector is a Polish-Canadian Sulpician, was nearly at capacity with eighteen residents, all priest students at various Roman pontifical universities. This provided a most hospitable environment and a convenient location from which to explore the city on foot.

I am grateful to the CBA for awarding me this rich opportunity, and to the U.S. Province of Sulpicians for



From left, Fr. Jarek Kauffman, PSS, Rector of the Canadian College, Sr. Mirabel, Mother Superior at Canadian College, and Fr. Witherup in the Vatican Gardens.

approving the sabbatical. It was a fitting conclusion to my administrative service and a great way to reenter the world of academia.

Ronald D. Witherup, PSS

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## Fr. Witherup Publishes Two More Books

The two new volumes from Ronald D. Witherup, PSS, include *Scripture and Tradition in the Letters of Paul* (Paulist, 2021) and a revision and update for a new edition of *The Critical Meaning of the Bible* (Paulist, 2023) by Raymond E. Brown, PSS, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Brown’s death.

Fr. Witherup previously compiled and edited three French volumes of writings by Gilles Chaillot, PSS:

Vol. 1: *Vivere Summe Deo in Christo Jesu: Etudes sur les écrits de Jean-Jacques Olier. Textes par Gilles CHAILLOT, PSS. Première Partie. Bulletin de Saint-Sulpice Suppléments No 1.* (Paris, 2022) [e-book].

- Vol 2: *Vivere Summe Deo in Christo Jesu: Etudes sur les écrits de Jean-Jacques Olier. Textes par Gilles CHAILLOT, PSS. Deuxième Partie. Bulletin de Saint-Sulpice Suppléments No 2.* (Paris, 2022) [e-book].
- Vol. 3: *Le Directeur spirituel selon Jean-Jacques Olier. Textes transcrits et introduits par Gilles CHAILLOT, PSS. Bulletin de Saint-Sulpice Suppléments No 3* (Paris, 2022) [e-book].





# Fraternal Visit of the Provincial to the African Region



**T**he Provincial Superior of the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States, Father Daniel F. Moore, PSS made a fraternal visit to the Sulpician African Region from September 24<sup>th</sup> to October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023. It had been four years since his last visit: a hiatus created by the Covid-19 pandemic. It was also Fr. Dan's first visit as the Provincial. Given this, he wanted the visit to be more fraternal than formal. He was accompanied throughout his visit by Father Victor Shikaputo, PSS, Regional Superior. The highlights of the visit included signing of the renewed contracts between the U.S. Province and the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB); between the Province and the Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM); and between the Province and the Diocese of Gaborone, Botswana.

Other important activities undertaken by Fr. Moore were meeting with the conferes in Lusaka where he also celebrated Mass for the seminary community at Emmaus Spirituality Centre. The Provincial also paid a courtesy visit to the newly appointed Apostolic Nuncio to Zambia and Malawi Archbishop GianLuca Perici at the nunciature in Lusaka. Later that evening he hosted a dinner for Archbishop emeritus, His Grace Telesphore-George Mpundu. Both recalled fondly Archbishop Mpundu's visit to the U.S. Province in the fall of 2014.

While residing at the Centre House, Fr. Dan, joined by Fr. Shikaputo, PSS and Fr. Nyambe, PSS, had a wide-ranging discussion with representatives of Walltech Industries Limited, a local construction company. The representatives presented a detailed plan for the retirement residence (modeled on the Villa Olier) to be built on the site. They offered to follow up on some essential questions, posed by the Provincial, one of which was, the availability of a sustainable water supply

from wells on the property, followed by two questions for the city planners: when would the paved road around the property be completed, and access to public (city) water be provided? The Walltech representatives also would provide letters of recommendation from archdiocesan officials currently employing their firm on a new school project in an adjacent neighborhood.

Later in the week, while in Livingstone, Zambia's tourist capital, Fr. Dan, accompanied by Fr. Shikaputo, and Fr. Hankomoone, PSS, met with Archbishop Franklyn Nubuasah, Diocese of Gaborone, Botswana. For the past three years, the U.S. Province has been responsible for The St. Kizito House of Studies, located in Lusaka, where Botswana seminarians reside, while studying philosophy at St. Bonaventure University College nearby. The discussions with Archbishop Frank in Livingstone focused on more cooperation between the Province and the Diocese of Gaborone. After three days in Livingstone, Archbishop Frank returned to Gaborone, and the team drove back to Lusaka, a journey of seven hours. On their way north, Fr. Dan met with Bishop Raphael Mweempwa, Diocese of Monze. Their meeting was brief but informative, highlighting a collaborative initiative in Monze for ongoing formation of the local diocesan clergy. Later that afternoon, Fr. Dan asked the team to visit the nearby Chikuni Parish cemetery where Fr. Smart Chinyama, PSS, PhL, is buried. It was, almost to the day, the tenth anniversary of his untimely death. After a period of quiet conversation, the three offered prayers for Fr. Smart and those also buried nearby. The team, then, proceeded to Lusaka.

On Sunday October 1<sup>st</sup>, Fr. Chris Arockiaraj, PSS arrived in Lusaka and the following day travelled with the Provincial Superior and the Regional Superior to





Mchinji, Malawi via Chipata, Zambia. Fr. Peter Kwaleyela, PSS, the Rector of St. Anthony's Major Philosophy Seminary at Kachebere received the visitors at Mfuwe International Airport. He then drove them to Kachebere on challenging roads. Having acquired the proper visas, the group toured the Historic Kachebere Seminary Campus during their three-day visit. At Kachebere the team walked around the campus, visiting the sites of several projects that had been undertaken since the arrival of the Sulpician Fathers. These include solar power installations, the farm, gardens, and buildings. The working farm, included a wide area, populated by a menagerie of goats, sheep, pigs, chickens, cattle, etc., and fishponds.

The fishponds, and the recently updated irrigation systems for the farm's fields were of particular interest

to Fr. Chris. To mark his previous twenty-fifth anniversary of priesthood, in lieu of gifts, he had solicited, and then donated substantial funds for the Kachebere farm irrigation project. He was well pleased with the farm's flourishing fields of diverse crops.

The final part of the fraternal visit included a brief safari at South Luangwa National Park in Mfuwe. Despite the hot weather the team was greeted with mesmerizing sights of various animals including herds of elephants, prides of lions, towers of giraffes, bloats of hippopotami, floats of crocodiles, leopards etc. to mention some. Night safaris in the park were particularly interesting as rare and shy species such as leopards could be seen trying to hide from the powerful safari torches mounted on jeeps.

Victor C. Shikaputo, PSS  
Regional Superior







## New Rector at St. Kizito House

Fr. Eugene Hampande Mwanza, PSS, was named Rector of St. Kizito House of Formation, March 2023, and took up residence in May 2023 while still teaching at St. Dominic's Major Seminary. He follows Fr. Cornelius Hankomoone, PSS, as rector. Fr. Cornelius has initiated a special Sulpician ongoing formation project in a new parish, St. Cecilia, in the Bbondo in Monze Diocese.

The Society of St. Sulpice runs the house of formation on behalf of Gaborone Diocese in Botswana. While doing formation at St. Kizito seminarians go to study philosophy at St. Bonaventure University College for the Franciscans. The university attracts many candidates from different religious orders and has an international character as there several foreign students studying there.

Fr. Eugene readily accepted the challenge to serve as rector at St. Kizito. Though rector, he continues to teach, adjunct, Church History and Patrology at St. Dominic.

He describes the St. Kizito community as wonderful one comprising four seminarians (three Tswana and one South African) and Fr. Victor Simutonga, PSS, in residence studying at St. Bonaventure's. The intake will grow to seven next academic year.

The annex expansion at St. Kizito's by Archbishop Nubuasah, of Gaborone, while Fr. Hankomoone was rector, has provided more accommodations for students and formators. There are, however, some major challenges in the main house

including managing the high electricity bills, maintenance of the buildings, and upgrading the kitchen, and air conditioning the common rooms (TV and study rooms). Fr. Eugene hopes to set up the office for the Rector with a new computer. These initiatives and other needs are part of the rector's conversations with Archbishop Nubuasah, as St. Kizito is owned by the Diocese of Gaborone in Botswana. Fr. Mwanza has a good working relationship with both the former rector and the archbishop as well as with Fr. Daniel Moore, PSS, Provincial.

Victor C. Shikaputo, PSS  
Regional Superior





# Mother Seton's Balcony Restored

The second-story balcony from which St. Elizabeth Ann Seton observed the activities of the Sulpician seminary on Paca Street in Baltimore was restored to its original look during the year 2022.

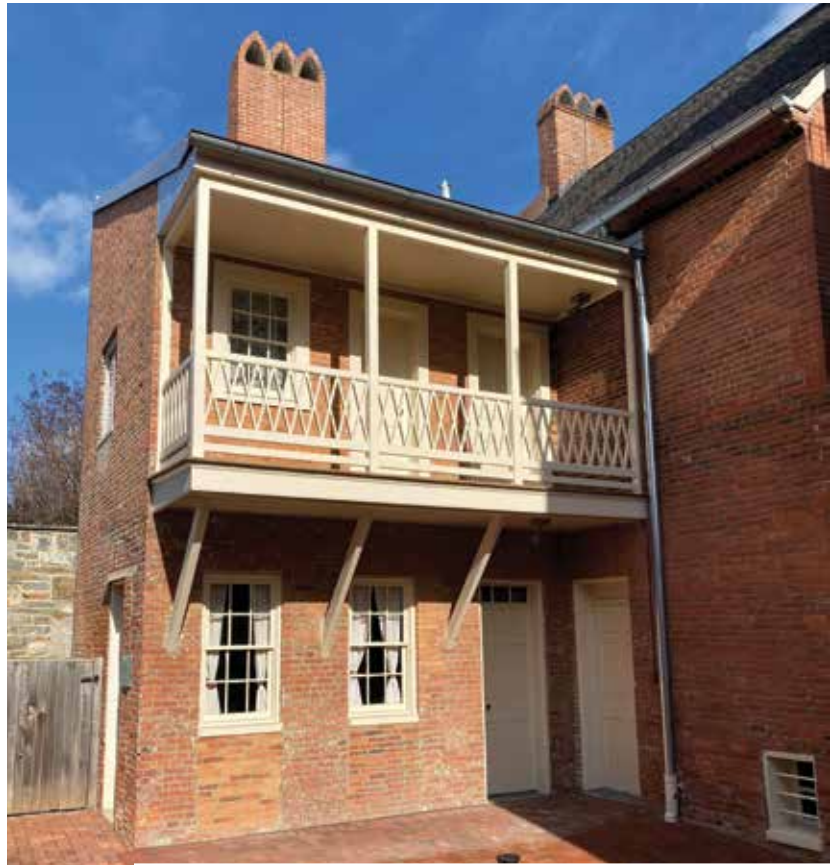
The restoration of the balcony on the 1808 Federal-style Mother Seton House was an idea born from a much more mundane observation: The intrusive “docents’ office,” a wood structure grafted onto the back of the building under the balcony in the early 1960s, was leaking and needed repair. As this structure was no longer in use, inspiration grew to remove the room and restore the badly deteriorated balcony above it.

Under the supervision of Lewis Contractors, the office structure was removed and the balcony restored by Worcester Eisenbrandt, a milling company known for their historical accuracy. The balcony restoration was paid for in part by a grant from the Baltimore National Heritage Area. The back of the Mother Seton House now occupies the original 1808 footprint and look. Mother Seton’s balcony is now a prominent feature of the structure. The well from which she drew her water is also highlighted, rather than obscured around the corner of the now-removed office.

Mother Seton came to Baltimore from New York on June 16, 1808, as a recently converted Catholic widow and mother of five at the invitation of the Sulpicians. She began a school for girls, establishing the first parochial school in the United States. These are well-known early steps on her life path to sainthood. Terry McCormack, the Visitor Center Associate, was the first researcher, however, to be curious about the lives and fates of the girls who attended St. Seton’s school at Paca Street. Through extensive archival research, McCormack was able to trace nine of the ten girls through their lives, most living long lives, most eventually in the Confederacy, and to their current resting places.

McCormack presented his findings “Taught By A Saint” in Marechal Hall of the Paca Street Visitor Center. Following his presentation was the official unveiling of the Mother Seton House balcony.

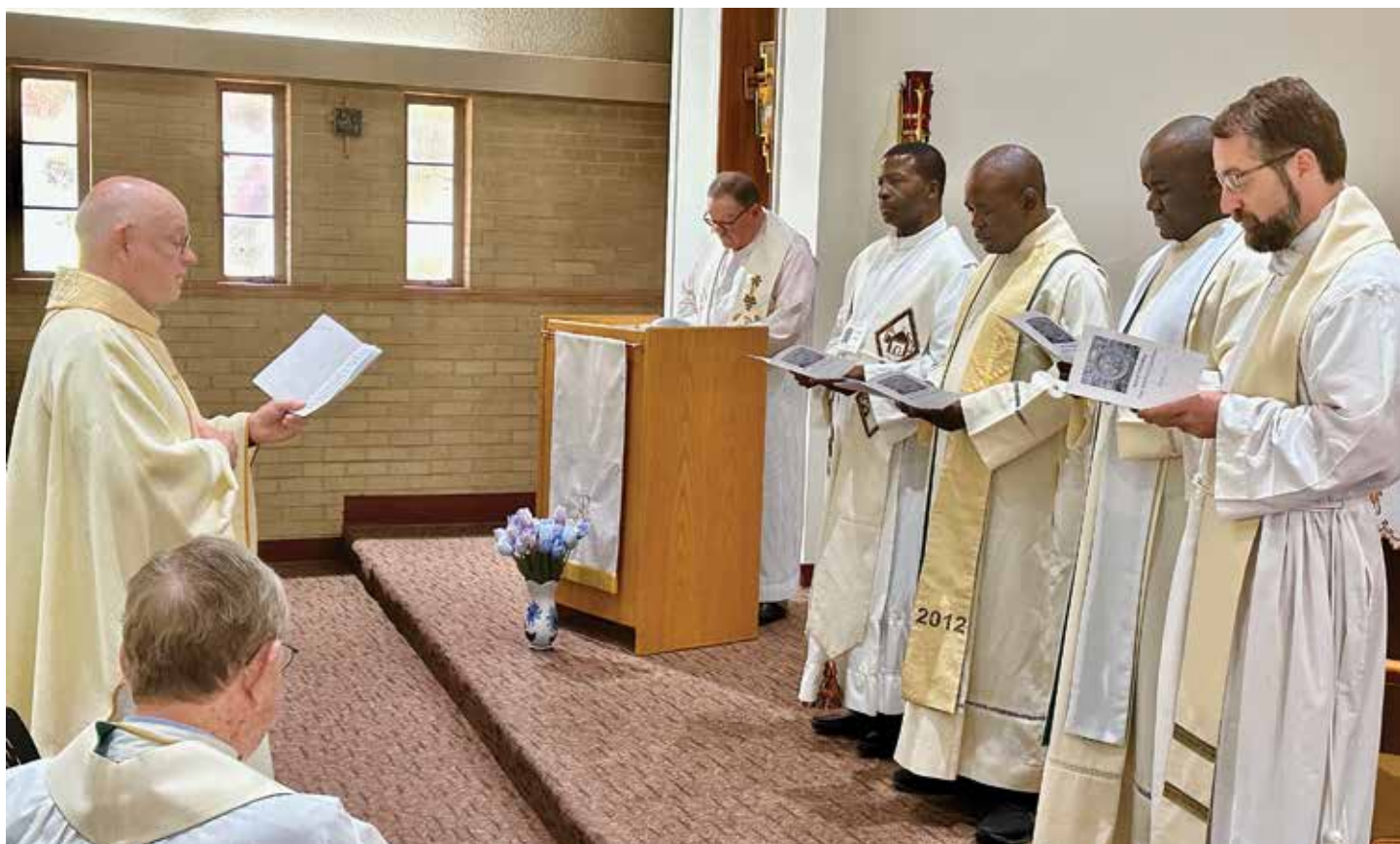
Blaine Carvalho  
Administration, St. Mary’s Historic Site



Top: the restored balcony. Right: before work began.



# Sulpician Retreat and Community Day 2023



Top and above, Rite of Welcoming

Retreat Director Fr. Anthony Michalik



The Province Retreat and Community Day for 2023 was conducted at the Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio, Texas, from May 27 to June 1. Redemptorist Fr. Anthony Michalik, of the Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Boston, directed the retreat. He reflected on Eucharist themes from the writings of Theologian and Servant of God Romano Guardini. On Memorial Day we remembered our deceased confreres Fr. Howard Bleichner, PSS, who was eulogized by Fr. Bob Leavitt, PSS, and Fr. Louis Reitz, PSS, who was eulogized by Fr. Dan Doherty, PSS. At the Welcoming Rite, Frs. Fredrik Hansen, Enoch Kanjira, Alick-George Ngosa, and Victor Simutonga were welcomed as candidates. Frs. Simon Cheba, Shawn Gould, and Neal Mulyata were celebrated as Temporary Members and Frs. Dominic Ciriaco and Rob Cro as Definitive Members.

During some of the Eucharistic Liturgies, our jubilarians served as presiders and homilists. Following are some excerpts.

Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS  
Provincial Secretary &  
Director of Personnel

### Tom Hurst, PSS

*Fr. Hurst, who was unable to attend the retreat, shared these reflections:*

Fifty years of priesthood have given me so many graced experiences in exercising the ministries of Word, Sacrament and Leadership for which I am deeply grateful to God and my sisters and brothers whom I have encountered. For me, the ministry of the Word has formed and influenced my life as a Christian, a priest, and a Sulpician.

I am deeply grateful to my teachers of Scripture, especially Fr. Raymond Brown, PSS and Fr. Joseph Fitzmyer. They taught me a manner of biblical interpretation that recognized the inspiration of God's Word and imparted to me a method that deepened my understanding of the text.

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I am also deeply grateful to the many seminarians, permanent deacons, priests, sisters and other ministers in the Church that I taught over this half century as well as the Sunday congregations to which I had the honor to proclaim God's Word. They taught me far more than I taught them by their openness and response.

May the power of God's Word continue to enrich our lives and ministries.

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path." (Ps. 119:105)



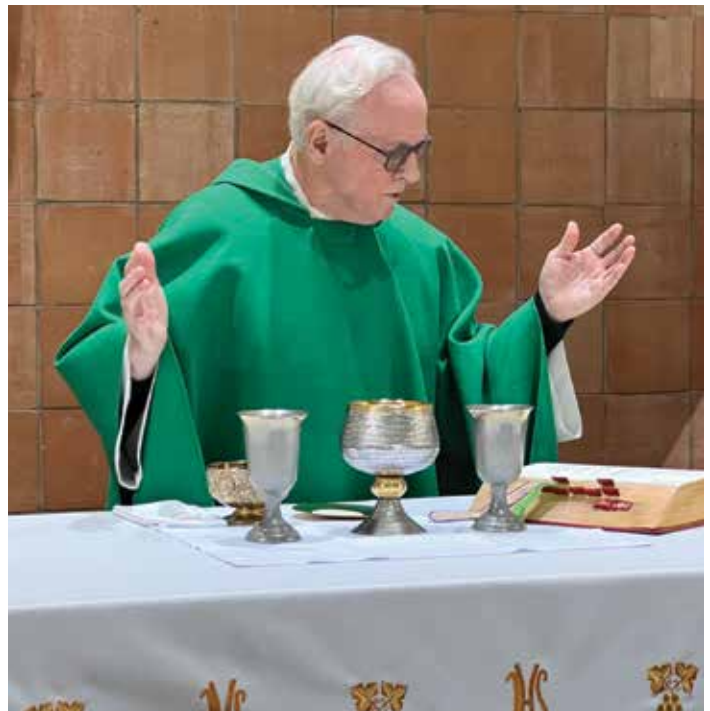
### Gerry McBrearity, PSS

As we gather for this Eucharist we remember Mary, Mother of the Church. As Pope Francis commented "The mystery of the Church is very much linked to the mystery of Mary, the mother of God and mother of the Church. Mary bears and cares for us, so does the Church, and like Mary, the Church makes us grow."

On this occasion, my 50th year as a priest is an exceptional moment but each time, we gather to celebrate the Eucharist we have an opportunity to pause and acknowledge that we have been blessed—most often in hidden and private ways but also in more public and known ways.

For me, first and foremost is the trust and transparency of generations of seminarians with whom I have worked as a spiritual director, advisor and seminary rector: their sense of humor, their concern for the poor, the community of friendship despite differences of opinion, that those under my care were willing to tell the truth and make difficult choices, that so many have internalized the attitude that is also in Christ Jesus, humility, availability for service, self-sacrifice—so great my happiness that I have been blessed and can bless.

As I stand before you, I am blessed to be a part of our Sulpician heritage, supported despite my limitations by so many confreres, including many of you in this chapel. As I reflect on my fifty years of priestly ministry and service as a Sulpician, I can honestly say that I would not have wanted it any other way.



### Bob Leavitt, PSS

Today's gospel reading from Mark 10 contains an odd exchange between Peter and Jesus. It concerns the payoff Peter expects for following Jesus, yet Jesus is not shocked by Peter's quid pro quo. He promises a windfall of blessings for whatever sacrifices have been made. A hundred times as much given back in kind as anything given up. Sounds like a good deal to me! Happy the priest who on his anniversary can say that the deal Jesus made with Peter has proven true for his priesthood as well. I can.

The rewards of serving fifty-five years with gifted Sulpician confreres at St. Mary's Seminary has been the blessing of my life. Being president-rector there for twenty-seven years brought me more blessings by a hundredfold than any sacrifices I made. When I stood up in the sanctuary of St. Joseph Cathedral in Hartford, after hands were imposed on my head so many years ago, little did I know how Christ would fulfill his promises.

Sulpicians must celebrate the priesthood and our priesthood, nevertheless. It belongs to Christ in the first place. Jesus became high priest on the cross, did he not? It seems unworthy to complain that priests have gotten a raw deal for something we didn't do as individuals when Jesus suffered what he didn't do.

From graves of Sulpicians who have parted from us, and who left on me a capacity for learning and priestly self-sacrifice, I try to imagine Newman's words spoken from eternity. From them I learned not just to understand modern philosophy and biblical scholarship and theological hermeneutics, but to love them and live what they teach.

Anniversary time is a time for remembering, a time for eucharistic anamnesis, a time for returning to beginnings which were auspicious for each of us.





## Richard Gula, PSS

One thing that our spiritual tradition clearly teaches us is that life in God is received, not achieved.

I am reminded here of the commission that Jesus gave his disciples.

Loosely translated, it reads,  
“The gift you have been given, give as gift.”  
We are to give freely what we have been given freely.

As I look back over 50 years of priesthood in the Society, I realize that my life has been more gift than achievement. I am in debt way over my head  
to the people who shaped me,  
and to the opportunities that the Society provided,  
inviting me to give what I have received.

Though I worked hard,  
I really can't say that all I have achieved is my own doing. No, I did not make it on my own.  
I was in this together with  
family, friends, teachers, confreres, and mentors.

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## Sulpician Candidate Fr. Thomson Mwaba

January 1, 2023—the very first day of the new year—saw the admission into candidacy, in the Society of St. Sulpice, of Thomson Jauking Mwaba Joseph, the newest candidate in the African Region. Born on January 10, 1988, to Frank Mwaba and Dorica Mwaba, Thomson is the fourth born in a Catholic family of nine, four males and five females, all of whom are alive. He lost his father in January 2015.

Thomson, a priest from Mpika Diocese, speaks of his vocation journey in some dramatic terms. Admittedly, while in high school, he had not contemplated joining the seminary, nor becoming a priest. He describes his entry into the seminary as a move “influenced by a situation.” As a chair of the Catholic Youths at Mpika Boys High School, he was requested, by the Vocations Director, to solicit for some prospective candidates to the major seminary. Surprisingly, the one and only candidate he had enlisted refused to appear on the list alone; he demanded that Thomson enlists himself as well, so they could be two. In an unexpected turn of events, Thomson succeeded in joining the seminary, while his colleague, who had earlier exhibited interest to become a priest, withdrew. In 2007, he joined Emmaus Spirituality Centre. After completing his formation program at St. Dominic's Major Seminary in 2015, he was ordained priest in the same year, on June 6. He held positions of Assistant Parish Priest of St. John the Apostle, St. Mary's and St. Mark's Parishes, as well as Diocesan Catechetical Coordinator and Youth Coordinator.

While serving in the Diocese, he was exposed to some literature about the Society of St. Sulpice, which



he read with keen interest. However, he describes Fr. Alick Ngosa as a source of much desired enlightenment on the identity of the Sulpicians.

Thomson has found Sulpician life and ministry “more fulfilling.” From his observation, the Society of St. Sulpice remains “a small group,” yet hugely impactful in the area of priestly formation. Nevertheless, he feels the Society of St. Sulpice “is not adequately understood in Zambia,” particularly in his Diocese, Mpika. In view of enlightening the people about the Society, he suggests occasional visits to and contacts with Dioceses.

Eugene Mwanza, PSS  
Rector of St. Kizito House of Formation

# St. John Hall Renovations at Assumption Seminary



As we near the completion of the St. John Hall renovation, it is fitting that it was named after St. John the Apostle because this renovation project was aimed at providing our Seminarians with a place where they can grow in their priestly formation, spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally, while building a community of love, loyalty, and friendship.

The renovation will provide the Seminarians with a study room, which includes tables for discussions, writing, reading, and computers for research; a vestibule area to foster the growth of friendships, love, and community; a small kitchen for the Seminarians to use; three spiritual direction rooms for the continued guidance and development of their priesthood; a laundry room; a catering room for special events; a conference room for special events; and an auditorium for their formation days and special events. The conference room can hold 187 guests and can be split into three separate sections. The auditorium is a great place to have speakers and can hold 100 guests. The AV system will have the ability to integrate the conference room and auditorium, allowing guests in both rooms to view and hear people speaking in the other parts of the building.



**In these photos are: Cece Smith, board member of Assumption Seminary, Autumn Smith, interior designer, and Most Reverend Gary Janak, Auxiliary Bishop of San Antonio.**

When the last nail is hammered and the last brushstroke applied, St. John Hall will stand as more than just a building at Assumption Seminary. It will be a testament to the power of vision and perseverance. May all those who enter St. John Hall be reminded of the dedication and determination our Seminarians put forth every day for the love of God and see it as a beacon of renewal.



## New Directors of Finance Join the US Province Team



**A**nn Lesini, Director of Finance for the Province since early March 2014, retired at the end of December 2023. As a community, we had the opportunity to congratulate Ann and bid her farewell at the Sulpician Christmas gathering on December 3 at the Provincial House. The Provincial House honored Ann at the staff Christmas luncheon. We thank Ann for her service to the Province and congratulate her on her retirement.

Jeff Trimmer, Sr., joined the Associated Sulpicians of the United States as the Province's Director of Finance on November 8, 2023. He has managed organizations with budgets as small as \$4 million to budgets over \$100 million. By applying financial, operational, and technology insights, he has served as a trusted partner with executive teams in identifying growth opportunities and achieving fast performance turnarounds.

As a CPA with an MBA, he has always realized that internal and external customers come first and has provided training on "How to Provide the Ultimate

Customer Experience." He believes that every person who works for a company is part of a team, and the team needs to support each other to get the job done. He has been recognized for developing strong teams that result in high morale and a fun, productive work environment.

He and his wife, Liz, have raised two successful children and reside in Bel Air with two dogs: a pug and a golden retriever. They are members of St. Margaret Parish, a large suburban parish northeast of Baltimore. (Coincidentally, or providentially, Ann is also a member of St. Margaret's.)

Kendra Nova joined Theological College's Administrative team as Director of Finance on November 20, 2023 bringing nearly 13 years of experience in finance for not-for-profit organizations. She has rich and varied experience in multiple finance and leadership roles. Her extensive leadership experience is augmented by an MBA.

Prior to coming to TC, Kendra has worked at other nonprofit organizations including charter schools within the district. In her past roles she has successfully implemented strict internal controls, leading and creating annual budgets over \$25 million in collaboration with various departments within the organizations. She has advocated and has executed multiple process automation initiatives to bring about efficiency in operations. She has been able to do this on the back of a successful track record of leading the finance team to deliver challenging goals under demanding timelines.

She always strives toward creating a productive, welcoming, and friendly work environment, encouraging every team member to achieve their very best to collectively accomplish their goals. Her leadership mantra is "communication, commitment, and positivity." Along with management and finance accomplishments, she is also a wife and a mom to three beautiful children. During her free time Kendra enjoys self-care routines and spending time with family.

**Top left: Jeff Trimmer. Top right, Kendra Nova. Left: Ann Lesini**



# Louis M. Reitz, PSS

Nov. 11, 1929–March 27, 2023



**B**orn November 11, 1929, and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, Fr. Reitz was one of two children of Louis and Eleanor (nee Hooper) Reitz. He is survived by Nancy D. Reitz, wife of his late brother Donald, John G. Reitz, Sara Macek-Folio, Deborah A. Reitz, Mary Elizabeth Appleby, and Mary Doyle Lindauer, and thirteen grand nieces and nephews.

Fr. Reitz began his education at St. Ambrose elementary school in Baltimore, Maryland. He attended high school at St. Charles Seminary, Catonsville, Maryland. He received his BA from St. Mary's Seminary Liberal Arts College (Paca Street) in 1951. He earned the STB from St. Mary's Seminary & University (Roland Park) in 1953 and the STL in 1955. He continued his graduate studies at The Catholic University of America and earned the MS in Library Science in 1959 and then the MEd at Loyola College of Baltimore, Maryland in 1960.

He was ordained for the Archdiocese of Baltimore on May 28, 1955. He immediately joined the Society of St. Sulpice and was

admitted as a member in 1957. As a Sulpician candidate (1955-1956), Fr. Reitz's first assignment was to teach Latin and Greek at St. Thomas Seminary, Louisville, KY. He then returned to Baltimore to attend the Solitude program (1956-1957). He returned to St. Thomas Seminary for another year to serve as librarian and to teach English, French, and public speaking. Fr. Reitz came back to Baltimore for three years (1958-1961) at St. Mary's Seminary & University (Roland Park) to serve as librarian and to teach catechetics and homiletics. He then returned to St. Thomas Seminary again and remained there for the next ten years (1961-1971) serving as librarian and teaching English, public speaking, and music.

Fr. Reitz came back to Baltimore again in 1971 to serve on the faculty of St. Mary's Seminary, Liberal Arts College, in Catonsville, Maryland from 1971-1979. There he held a variety of positions but mostly to serve as librarian, vice-rector (1974-1975), and, after the College closed, the director of the Education for Christian Ministries Program (1977-1979). He then assumed his longest assignment in the Province – Treasurer from 1979 to his retirement in 2000. Fr. Ron Witherup, who served as provincial at the end of Fr. Reitz's tenure recalled: "I always found him cooperative and responsive to the requests of the Provincial Council. He also had a good sense of humor, which sometimes made us all laugh!"

He began his retirement with residence at St. Pius X Church, Baltimore, where he had been serving on a part-time basis for thirty-eight years. In 2016, he moved to the newly renovated Sulpician retirement community of Villa Olier in Catonsville, Maryland on September 1, 2016. Fr. Dan

Doherty, the superior commented: "What is rather touching to the residents of the Villa as well as the staff is Fr. Lou's deep sense of gratitude. He frequently expressed his deep appreciation for his family and friends, priestly assignments, gracious concern from Sulpician confreres over the years, and generous care that the Villa staff had bestowed on him in his retirement."

In addition to his time in the library, in the classroom, and behind the desk in the treasurer's office, Fr. Reitz served as chaplain to the Baltimore Fire Department. Most of all, he loved to be on the water of the Chesapeake Bay. For many years he had a house on the shore and was an active member of the United States Power Squadron, a nonprofit all-volunteer national boating fraternity dedicated to promoting safe boating by educating the public and providing advanced education to its members.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Fr. Reitz at Our Lady of the Angels Chapel, where he studied and served for many years when it was St. Charles College. Fr. Daniel Moore, the provincial, presided and Fr. Daniel Doherty, the superior of the Villa Olier Community gave the homily. He was interred in the Sulpician cemetery at Catonsville, Maryland.

Anthony J. Pogorelc, PSS, Provincial Secretary & Director of Personnel, wrote the obituaries for Fathers Reitz and Barré.





# Michael L. Barré, PSS

Aug. 14, 1943–Sept. 25, 2023

“O Lord, I have heard of your renown, and I stand in awe, O Lord, of your work.” (Habakkuk: 3: 2) This is the opening line of the Prayer of Habakkuk, the subject of Fr. Barré’s unfinished final work. He was most renowned for his book, *The Lord Has Saved Me: A Study of the Psalm of Hezekiah, Isaiah 38:9-10*. Many have been awed by Fr. Barré’s work as a Scripture scholar.

Born August 14, 1943, in Memphis, Tennessee, Fr. Barré was one of two children of Lee and Mary (Loneragan) Barré.

Fr. Barré was educated in Memphis parochial schools and then entered St. Mary’s College, St. Mary, Kentucky where he earned the BA in 1966. He earned his STB in 1968, STM in 1970, and STL in 1981 from St. Mary’s Seminary & University, Baltimore, Maryland. He was ordained for the Diocese of Memphis, Tennessee, on May 23, 1970, and admitted to the Society of St. Sulpice in 1974.

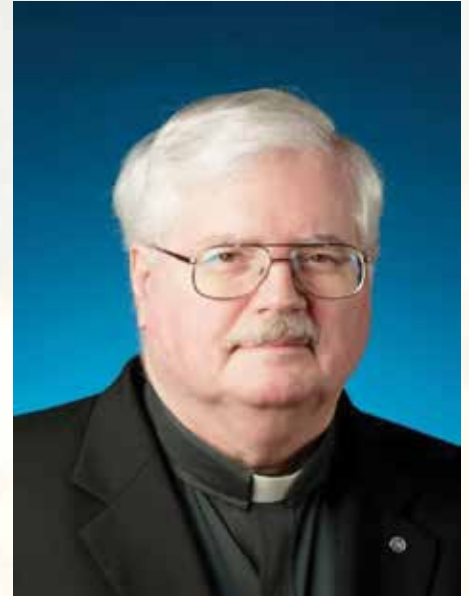
After ordination, he received his first Sulpician teaching assignment at St. Patrick’s Seminary, Menlo Park, California, from 1970 to 1973. He then went to Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, from 1973 to 1978 to pursue a doctorate in near eastern studies. After completing his doctorate, he returned to St. Patrick’s Seminary (1978-1992). He had his first sabbatical from 1988-1989 at the Vaugirard community in Berkeley, California. From St. Patrick’s Seminary, he returned to Baltimore to join the faculty of St. Mary’s Seminary & University from 1992 to 2013. During another sabbatical from 2011 to 2012, he worked on his translation and interpretation of the Prayer of Habakkuk. He retired in 2013, remaining in residence at St. Mary’s Seminary & University until renovations at Villa Olier, the Sulpician retirement community,

were complete. He moved to Villa Olier in Catonsville, Maryland, in 2016.

As an Old Testament scholar, he was in a class of his own. His contributions to Old Testament studies will be a lasting tribute to his linguistic skills. He served one term as President of the Catholic Biblical Association and as editor of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*. As a teacher, he was known to be demanding. One of his former students commented: “You had to earn any grade that he assigned.”

Fr. Barré will be well remembered as one of the “characters” of the Society in a time when some claimed that all the “characters” had died. Consistently, his confreres, his students, and his friends fondly remarked: “He was a character.” As a colleague, he was delightfully witty and could be quite entertaining with his marvelous sense of humor and his creativity. Friends say there are so many humorous stories about him that it would take hours to recount them all. Combining his profession and his humor, one Halloween he came to a party dressed as a six-foot tall Dead Sea Scroll with Hebrew letter cut outs so he could see where he was going. His impatience was another well-known characteristic. Tardiness for an appointment or for a deadline did not sit well with him. The antics of other drivers on the road could also be the object of his ire.

During his final years he experienced cognitive decline. Little by little, he became more confused and forgetful. Sometimes his good humor enabled him to laugh at his lapses of memory or when he could not find his cane, his phone, or his hat, which were often nearby and in plain sight. At other times, the frustration got to him. He realized that once he was able to do so many things and now, he could not. It was



hard to let go of so much. Fr. Thomas Ulshafer, PSS, his long-time friend who preached the funeral homily, said that the people who interacted with him regularly were amazed that somehow, he was able to keep his steady decline from turning him sour. He said that Fr. Barré’s “ability to accept his tough situation could be explained by his customary good humor but even more so by his faith. Like the speaker in the first reading from Lamentations, he genuinely believed: ‘My portion is the Lord ... therefore I will hope in him.’ ”

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on October 2, 2023, at Our Lady of the Angels Parish, Catonsville. Since the provincial, Fr. Daniel Moore, PSS, was on an official visitation to Africa, Fr. Daniel Doherty, PSS, the superior of the Villa, presided. Fr. Thomas Ulshafer, PSS, gave the homily for his long-time friend. Fr. Bud Stevens, PSS, the first consultor, gave the Final Commendation. Burial was in the Sulpician Cemetery. Fr. Leo Larivee, PSS, the pastor of Our Lady of the Angels, led the Committal Service.

(Continued from Page 1)

and animals—animals who possess human characteristics, e.g., speech, and humans who possess animal characteristics, e.g., territorial aggressiveness. As the Wizard in Oz (Joel Grey) puts it, “The best way to bring folks together is to give them a really good enemy.”

Not surprisingly, *Jesus* observes and comments upon this juxtaposition of *insiders and outsiders*. For example, in Mark’s Gospel, Chapter 9:38–48, Jesus offers an instruction about discipleship to his followers—some of whom apparently perceive themselves as *insiders*. His instruction is applicable to both the early, parochial Christian community and to us, the 21st century Christian, world community.

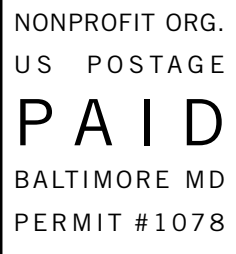
The first section of the pericope touches on a *very important issue* in the Church and world today: the relationship between Christians and those outside the Christian faith community. In the episode of the “strange exorcist,” *Jesus shows a remarkable openness to an outsider*. When John complains that someone *outside their circle* is driving out demons in Jesus’ name, Jesus comments that no one performing a miracle in his name can speak badly of him. Then he states as a general principle that “whoever is not against us is for us.” (Mk 9:38–41)

The second section concerns acts of kindness done by *outsiders* to followers of Jesus. Jesus indicates, remarkably, that God will reward such good deeds.

Once more Jesus displays an *open, tolerant, and affirming attitude* to those outside his circle. Openness and tolerance, kindness and compassion, patience and generosity characterize this Marcan Jesus’

# Update

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affirming attitude toward *outsiders*. His attitude toward *insiders*, who scandalize Christians, et al. is, however, foreboding and forbidding. (Mk 9:42–48)

Jesus’ *stern warning* to the *insiders*, i.e., his disciples—us—regarding *scandal and sin* is unmistakable. The Greek word, *skandalon*, refers to a *rock or stumbling block* that impedes the progress of others, disturbs the well-being of the other. The extreme and exaggerated language emphasized the seriousness with which the scandal is taken. *Jesus holds insiders to a high standard*. They must not harm the body and the spirit of other believers under any circumstances. Giving scandal in this sense is a grave evil that must be avoided. (Mk 9:42–43) We need not stretch our memories to know this truth. One need only recall the bedeviling clergy sexual abuse crisis,

and the prejudicial violence inflicted by and among Christians, et al.

The message is clear: *we insiders, must avoid grave evil*, i.e., any word or action that causes scandal among the faithful. This could be as simple, and, unfortunately, as prevalent, as self-righteous, prejudicial attitudes among the faithful toward others—*both insiders and outsiders*. It is as complex as the insidious violence among religious peoples in geopolitical conflicts. Whatever the case, self-righteous, prejudicial, haughty attitudes are condemned by Jesus.

Jesus—unlike Oz’s wicked Wizard—does not focus our attention upon an enemy, but rather Jesus focuses our attention upon a neighbor. And who is my *neighbor*, you may ask? Jesus responds both *the insider and the outsider*. Go, then, and strive to be his disciple: open, tolerant, inclusive, and affirming, i.e., *Christian*.



Update is also available on the Sulpician website at [www.sulpicians.org](http://www.sulpicians.org)