



Update

The Sulpicians, Province of the US

Volume I, 2026

International Colloquium



Provincial's Message

Daniel F. Moore, PSS

"It is always about MISSION!"

Years ago, during a National Religious Vocations Conference (NRVC), Sr. Georgette Lehmutz, OSF, gave a pragmatic and passionate talk entitled, "It's Always about the Mission!" Her wisdom was not lost on this listener as her experience mirrored my own. Her words also were appropriate for our *la petite compagne*.

Sr. Georgette began by clarifying her terms, defining charism, vision, mission, stewardship (in terms of charism & mission), and response (to the Gospel) and stewardship of mission (vowed confreres and colleagues). Her community, as do many, face similar challenges and navigate strategically the hazards of troubled waters. It was gratifying to hear echoes of our

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The General Council of St. Sulpice was happy to sponsor and organize an International Symposium during the third week of July. Held at our Casa Sacerdotal di Bogota, the conference was attended by members of the General Council, the General Secretary and General Treasurer, the Provincial Councils of Canada, France, and the United States, as well as our Sulpician rectors from our various seminaries in Colombia and Brazil. (Our only truly sad note was the absence of some of our confrères from the American and French provinces, due to unimaginable visa problems!). However, thanks to a team from CELAM, we were able to broadcast our conferences to those not able to be physically present.

The subject of our encounter was a theme at the very center of our Sulpician mission: the Internal Forum, an element crucial to our Sulpician pedagogy and very much under questioning, if not attack, today.

We were blessed to open with Mass, presided by the Cardinal Archbishop of Bogota, His Eminence, Luis José Rueda Aparicio. During the week, we had four presenters, two from within our confreres, and two experts from outside: Fr. Bernard Pitaud, PSS, on the place of the spiritual director in the discernment of priestly vocations in the pedagogy of St. Sulpice; Fr. Leonardo Cardenas, "Definition and Canonical Reasoning of Sexual Abuse—The Role of Seminary Formation Councils and Spiritual Directors"; Dr. Daniela Cardona, "Current Psychological Aspects in Vocational Guidance, Taking into Account the Current Culture, Commitment to Freedom, Social and Experiential Heritage, to Detect 'Red Flags' in



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Fr. Shayne Craig, PSS welcoming the international gathering.





Cardinal Archbishop of Bogota, His Eminence, Luis José Rueda Aparicio with Very Rev. Shayne Craig, PSS, and other Sulpicians.



The Salt Cathedral of Zipaquirá is an underground church built within the tunnels of a salt mine 660 feet underground in a halite mountain near the city of Zipaquirá, in Cundinamarca, Colombia.

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Formation and Discernment,” and Fr. Phillip J. Brown, PSS, “Issues around the ‘Internal forum’ from a Canonical Perspective. Particular Aspects of the Issues Involved in the United States in Relation to Our PPF6—Some Considerations of Civil Law and from a Spiritual and Theological Perspective.”

In addition to the conferences, the confrères enjoyed a time of spiritual formation together for

moments of daily liturgical prayer and Eucharist, times of Adoration and Marian devotion. We also benefited from an outing together to visit the nearby city of Zipaquirá, the central plaza and historic Cathedral, as well as the famous “Salt Cathedral,” to share a meal, and to conclude with a wonderful cultural evening with our Colombian confrères! Truly, their hospitality was beyond words!

The week was a privileged occasion to be more deeply rooted

in our mission of accompaniment of our candidates, to assist them better to respond to the call of the Lord Jesus to help shepherd his disciples, as well as an opportunity to come together and know each other better as brother Sulpicians from across the world.

I am happy to say that we are working to publish the papers of the Colloquium in the not too distant future.

Very Rev. Shayne E. M. Craig, PSS
Superior General

Update

is a publication that seeks to inform its readership of the state and current activities of the US Province of the Society of St. Sulpice, its membership and institutions.

For more information, please visit our website at www.sulpicians.org.

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Fr. Neal Mulyata Named New Director of Personnel

The U.S. Province of Sulpicians went to Zambia, in southern Africa, in 1989 to assist with priestly formation. The bishops of Zambia had requested the Society's assistance because of a dearth of qualified formators. Now, 36 years later, a Zambian has come to the U.S. to help the Province with its own contemporary needs.

Fr. Neal Mulyata, PSS, a priest from the Diocese of Solwezi in northwestern Zambia, first assisted the Province here as a formation faculty member at Theological College in Washington (2024–25). As of July 1, 2025, however, at the request of Fr. Moore, the Provincial, he became the Province's Director of Personnel and Provincial Secretary. His rich and diverse background uniquely qualifies him for this position.

Ordained a priest for Solwezi in 2001, Fr. Neal joined the Society of St. Sulpice in 2018, after many years in parochial ministry and administrative duties in his diocese. In addition to being a parish pastor, Fr. Neal also served as Vicar General and Manager of Human Resources for his diocese, as well as the Diocesan Pastoral Coordinator.

Prior to his arrival in the U.S., Fr. Neal did formation ministry in Zambia. He was a faculty member at St. Kizito House in Lusaka, a propaedeutic formation program for the dioceses of Botswana but entrusted to the Sulpicians in Zambia's capital city. He also served on the faculties of the Sulpician-run Emmaus Spirituality Centre and of St. Augustine's Major Seminary. His experience even extends to communications. He managed the diocesan radio station in Solwezi for four years; at the same time he



Seated: Fr. Neal Mulyata, PSS; standing: Fr. Ron Witherup, PSS.

was head of religious programming in the communications department for the Zambian Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB).

In short, Fr. Neal brings a wealth of experience to his new duties for the U.S. Province, which is grateful for his missionary presence!

Ronald D. Witherup, PSS

Constitutions of the Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice 2003



Constitutions Article 3

Collaborating with the bishops, the Society wishes to share in the solicitude for the whole Church and to take part in the mutual aid among local churches. Consequently, its members may be called upon to exercise their ministries in countries distant from their native lands. Wherever they work, "they will organize their pastoral activity in such a way that it will serve to spread the gospel among non-Christians" (A.G. 39).

"... It pleased him [Our Lord] to say to me; 'I want you to take care of forming an apostolic society. . . ' Thus I envisioned the Society of Saint Sulpice, whose members must have the apostolic spirit, to go out and found churches for God" (M, 107).

*Jean-Jacques Olier (1608-1657)
Founder
Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice*

Rev. Shawn D. Gould, PSS, Named President-Rector of St. Mary's Seminary & University



The Provincial Council has appointed Sulpician Fr. Shawn D. Gould, PSS, STL, JD, as the next President-Rector of St. Mary's Seminary & University in Baltimore, Maryland, effective July 1, 2026. This appointment has received the prerequisite approvals of Most Reverend William Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore and Chancellor of St. Mary's, and Very Reverend Shayne E.M. Craig, PSS, Superior General of the Society of St. Sulpice.

The Provincial Superior Fr. Daniel F. Moore praised the appointment commenting, "This is a moment of great promise for St. Mary's. Fr. Shawn Gould brings to this essential ministry a deep love for the priesthood, a genuine pastoral heart, and a virtuous apostolic vision rooted in the Church's living tradition. Under his leadership, St. Mary's will continue to flourish as a Sulpician house of prayer, priestly formation, and missionary zeal, serving the bishops of our nation, the seminarians entrusted to us, and the needs of the Church with enhanced clarity and purpose."

Archbishop William E. Lori, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Chancellor of St. Mary's

Seminary & University, expressed strong confidence in the appointment: "I am delighted with the appointment of Fr. Shawn Gould, PSS, as the next President-Rector of St. Mary's Seminary and University. Fr. Gould's priestly zeal and deep commitment to priestly formation will serve him well as he leads the seminary community. I am also grateful to Fr. Phil Brown, PSS, for his dedicated years of service as Rector, during which he laid a strong foundation for future generations of young men discerning a call to the priesthood."

Fr. Gould responded, "I am grateful to Fr. Moore and the Provincial Council, to Archbishop Lori, and to the St. Mary's Board of Trustees for the confidence they have placed in me. I thank Fr. Brown for his excellent stewardship of St. Mary's over the past decade, and I look forward to working with the faculty, staff, and benefactors of St. Mary's as we continue to implement Fr. Olier's vision of an apostolic house promoting conformity to Christ in the interior lives of seminarians and priests."

A priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago and a member of the Society of St. Sulpice since 2021, he currently serves as the Director

of the Blessed Fr. Michael J. McGivney Propaedeutic House of Formation and St. Mary's Historic Site in Baltimore since 2024. Fr. Gould also served on the faculty of St. Mary's, Roland Park, as Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, spiritual director, and formation faculty member.

Fr. Gould's academic formation is notable. He holds pontifical theological degrees with distinction, a Juris Doctor from the University of California, Berkeley School of Law, and is completing doctoral studies at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome, with research deeply rooted in the Christological and spiritual theology of Jean-Jacques Olier and the French School.

Fr. Gould will succeed the Reverend Phillip J. Brown, PSS, JD, JCD, who will retire on June 30, 2026, after ten years of faithful service. Fr. Moore stated, "The Province is profoundly grateful to Fr. Brown for his decade of devoted service as President-Rector of St. Mary's, Roland Park. He has guided the institution with wisdom, steadiness, and fidelity during a period of significant challenge and transition, and his leadership has left an enduring mark on the life of the Seminary and University."



A Miracle of the Catholic Church Visits St. Mary's Historic Site

While every visitor to St. Mary's Historic Site on Paca Street and location of the McGivney House of Formation, is a miracle of God's creation, on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, the site played host to a confirmed miracle of the Catholic Church: Ann O'Neill, the second miracle attributed to Elizabeth Ann Seton during her canonization process. Part of the visiting group of Ss. Peter and Paul parish of Easton, Maryland, Ms. O'Neill toured the grounds upon which St. Elizabeth Ann Seton walked 217 years ago.

It was 73 years ago that four-year-old Ann Theresa O'Neill's mother Felixena "Sis" O'Neill—a life-long Maryland native—asked Mother Seton to intercede on her behalf and cure her daughter of acute lymphocytic leukemia, a fatal and incurable disease. She laid Ann on the tomb of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and her next blood test showed no sign of the disease, a true miracle indeed. A circle of sorts was completed when Ms. O'Neill climbed the stairs of the Mother Seton House and held onto the apple wood railing, an original 1808 feature of the house; Mother Seton held onto the same railing when she lived there from June 16 of 1808 to September of 1809. It was truly amazing that St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's home on Paca Street—itsself a third-class relic due to its own miraculously preserved original interior—was visited by a living miracle attributed to Mother Seton.

Elizabeth Ann Seton took her private vows with Bishop John Carroll—the United States's first Catholic bishop—in Baltimore and discerned her vocation in the *Chapelle Basse* (Lower Chapel) of St. Mary's Seminary Chapel. It was from Paca Street that the Sulpicians entrusted Mother Seton's care and spiritual development to the Sulpicians living in the untamed 'Wilderness' at the edge of the new United States, now known as Emmitsburg in western Maryland. It was under their guidance that she founded the Daughters of Charity of St. Joseph in 1809.

Mother Seton's cause for canonization gained momentum in the 1930s, and the Sulpician Fathers initiated renovations of her Baltimore home in the 1960s. She was canonized on September 24, 1975.

The McGivney House of Formation at 600 North Paca Street in Baltimore is the site of the first Roman Catholic Seminary in the U.S. as well as the neo-Gothic 1808 St. Mary's Seminary Chapel and the 1806 Federal-style Mother Seton House.

Blaine Carvalho
Administration
St. Mary's Historic Site (Paca Street)



Ann Theresa O'Neill meets Fr. Shawn D. Gould, PSS



Chapelle Basse (Lower Chapel) of St. Mary's Seminary Chapel



St. Thérèse Comes to TC!

On the 100th anniversary of canonization, the relics of St. Thérèse of Lisieux arrived at Theological College the morning of November 19. Seminarians, faculty, and staff embraced this rare opportunity to host the revered relics, reminded of the Little Flower's holy example—a great inspiration to seminarians in formation, and to all.

After the welcome ceremony in the TC foyer, the reliquary was carried in procession to the chapel and placed facing the altar surrounded by red and white roses. The relics were privately venerated by the TC community until the chapel was opened to the public. Several hundred of the faithful were afforded this special moment of prayer with St. Thérèse, followed by Solemn Evening Prayer, and more time for private veneration for the house.

After Solemn Morning Prayer the following morning, the reliquary departed in procession to the East Façade of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, where it remained open for veneration in the Upper Church.

The TC community participated in three Masses at the Shrine with Cardinal Wilton Gregory, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, and Cardinal Christophe Pierre. The next stop for the relics was the Carmel of Port Tobacco in La Plata, Maryland.

Suzanne Tanzi
Media and Promotions Manager
Theological College



St. Mary's Seminary & University Hosts Reception and Night Prayer for Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commission



Cardinal Roche addresses the St. Mary's Seminary community in the Chapel of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (The photo for this article is by Nicholas Ndukong, a St. Mary's Seminarian from the Diocese of Kumbo, Cameroon, and An Dinh, a St. Mary's Seminarian from the Archdiocese of Baltimore.)

To participate well – fully, actively, consciously – in the liturgy is to be involved in a process of deep on-going formation.” Cardinal Arthur Roche (Prefect, Dicastery for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments) addressed these words to those gathered for the annual meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions in Baltimore, September 30 to October 2, 2025. Seminarians and faculty of St. Mary's Seminary & University (Baltimore) attended the meeting as part of the seminary's Pastoral Leadership Institute, funded by a Lily Grant.

On September 30, St. Mary's seminarians participated in Mass at Baltimore's Cathedral of Mary our Queen presided over by Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States. Following Mass, St. Mary's Seminary hosted a reception and celebration of Night Prayer, presided over by Fr. Phillip Brown PSS, for meeting participants, including Cardinals Roche and Pierre, as well as Abbot Gregory Polan O.S.B., Bishop Mark Seitz, and Bishop Michael Woost. That same evening, Cardinal Roche addressed the St. Mary's

community in the seminary chapel, encouraging the seminarians to trust in the formation they are receiving and to trust in the Church's pastors.

On October 1, seminarians engaged in formation on the Liturgy of the Hours. They heard addresses from Cardinal Roche on liturgical formation and Abbot Polan on the Psalms. After each address they participated in discussions with pastoral liturgists from across the U.S. Seminarians also attended workshops on the history of the Hours and on sacred music. The day concluded with Mass at Baltimore's Basilica of the Assumption presided over by Cardinal Roche.

Reflecting on the study day and, especially, the encounters with Cardinal Roche, seminarian Colin Kulmoski (Diocese of Pittsburgh) reflected, "I was personally extremely moved by [Cardinal Roche's] wisdom, his reverence, and his holiness of life. The day impacted me greatly."

James M. Starke, PhD
St. Mary's Seminary & University
Associate Professor of Systematic Theology
Director of Liturgy

Jubilee Year – World Day of Education

While in Rome, Fr. Chris Arockiaraj, PSS, and Fr. Martin Burnham, PSS, who are on sabbatical, were blessed to be able to participate in the Jubilee talk and Mass on November 1, 2025, the feast of All Saints. Pope Leo XIV concluded the Jubilee of the World Day of Education where he proclaimed St. John Henry Newman the 38th doctor of the church.

The Pope in his homily said, “Cardinal Newman’s impressive spiritual and cultural stature will surely serve as an inspiration to new generations whose hearts thirst for the infinite, and who, through research and knowledge, are willing to undertake the journey which, as the ancients said, takes us *per aspera ad astra*, through difficulties to the stars.”

Fr. Arockiaraj commented that Pope Leo XIV identified three current priorities for education:

1. The cultivation of interior life
2. The formation of humane digital culture opposed to the algorithm digital culture
3. The cultivation of dialogue and cooperation as opposed to rigid narrow mindedness.

As a Sulpician, he was impressed by his sharing on the “interior life” (Sulpician spirituality).



Fr. Martin Burnham, PSS, and Fr. Chris Arockiaraj, PSS

Basselin Days



Fr. Bud Stevens, PSS, introduced six current Basselin scholars, who came to Aquinas Hall to share their unique experience.

From the first class of seminarians who graduated from the Basselin Scholars Program in 1926, Theological College and Catholic University’s School of Philosophy have hosted more than 675 priest aspirants in this rigorous academic and seminary formation program. Its permanent fixture at TC and the university was lauded and supported with fundraising during Basselin Days, two days of special events recognizing its unique legacy.

The next day of events began at the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, with keynote speaker Monsignor James Shea (B ’98). Back on campus Bishop Michael Olson (B ’89) celebrated a memorial Mass for deceased Basselin scholars and faculty. This was followed by the introduction of a book focused on Basselin alumni, to be published in 2026. The author, Aaron Martin, Esq., was himself a former Basselin. In his book, Martin traces

110 years of the program’s history primarily through noteworthy graduates, representing its “bright lights.”

The final intimate component of these days was a moment to meet some current Basselins, who offered insights into their lives of fraternity and academic study. Fr. Bud Stevens, PSS, Rector of Theological College, asserted that they “represent the very intent of Theodore Basselin in giving birth to this program, which is to form men committed to teaching and conveying the truth.”

A School of Philosophy’s Spring lecture titled, “Boethius in Aquinas’s Ontology and Theology of Accidents,” by the renowned academic, Father Stephen Brock, Ph.D., concluded Basselin Days.

Suzanne Tanzi
Media and Promotions Manager
Theological College



A Transformative Journey

At the invitation of Fr. Moore, I had the privilege of traveling to Lusaka, Zambia, from August 8 to 23. This journey was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I was accompanied by Fr. Ron Witherup, whose guidance, support, and careful planning were instrumental in making this trip a success! I am sincerely grateful to him for his leadership throughout our time in Zambia. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Fr. Victor Shikaputo for his generous hospitality and for driving us throughout Lusaka.

My first impression of Lusaka was how challenging it would be for me to navigate the local roads. Many streets were unpaved, marked by random speed bumps, a lack of street signage, and numerous non-functional traffic lights. The level of poverty was striking and deeply moving. On our drive from the airport to the Sulpician Center House, we passed long stretches of cinder block walls topped with razor wire. Behind these barriers were small huts—though, occasionally, we also saw homes that appeared to belong to the middle class.

Fr. Ron and I were given the opportunity to tour the seminaries and the House of Formation where the Sulpicians work in Zambia. I was immediately impressed by the Sulpicians' efforts to maintain self-sufficiency and reduce costs through agriculture and livestock. Fr. Patrick Simutowe's chicken farm was particularly remarkable—it could rival commercial operations. Their aim is not only to sustain the seminary community but eventually to support the local population as well.

During our visit, we attended the African Region Strategic Planning Meeting held at the Protea Hotel Safari Lodge. The presentations were insightful, and it was inspiring to witness the Sulpicians' commitment to the development and growth of the African Region. One particularly meaningful experience for me was attending

daily Mass with twelve Sulpicians, where I was the only layperson present. I am grateful to Fr. Simon Cheba for his kindness in guiding me through the liturgy.

As the trip came to a close, Fr. Witherup arranged for us to spend three days in Livingstone for rest and reflection. We had the incredible opportunity to visit Victoria Falls—a truly awe-inspiring sight. We also embarked on a safari, where we observed elephants, monkeys, zebras, giraffes, and many other wild animals. A highlight was seeing rhinoceroses, which are under constant protection due to the threat of poaching. On our final evening, we enjoyed dinner at the Royal Livingstone Hotel, watching the sunset as wildlife roamed freely across the resort grounds.

I would like to thank Fr. Moore for encouraging me to take part in this transformative journey. The experience has broadened my perspective and deepened my appreciation for the global mission of the Sulpician community.

Jeff Trimmer
Director of Finance



Jeff Trimmer (left) and Fr. Ron Witherup, PSS, at Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River.



New Faculty Chair Honors Retired Sulpician

Caption

Some older readers of *Update* will remember the late Fr. William J. Lee, PSS, who served as President of St. Mary's Seminary & University from 1972 to 1980. During his tenure, Fr. Lee worked closely with his younger colleague Fr. Frederick J. Cwiekowski, PSS, who served as rector of St. Mary's in Roland Park, Maryland, from 1974 to 1977. When Fr. Lee died on February 19, 2012, he left a sizeable legacy to St. Mary's with the intention that it would lead eventually to the establishment of a faculty chair in honor of Fr. Cwiekowski.

In August 2026, Fr. Cwiekowski will celebrate his ninetieth birthday, and so some of his former students who became Sulpicians decided to fulfill Fr. Lee's wish, and, with an additional donation from the Sulpician community, St. Mary's established the Fr. Frederick Cwiekowski Chair in Systematic Theology. The Chair was announced on February 7, and first professor to hold it will be named this coming summer.

An alumnus of St. Mary's, Fr. Cwiekowski was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, in 1962 and became a Sulpician two years later.



After an initial seminary assignment and the completion of an MA in philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, he was assigned to further graduate studies at the University of Louvain where he earned the STD in 1972. His primary area of interest was ecclesiology, and his doctoral thesis was published by Louvain

University Press in 1971 under the title, *The English Bishops and the First Vatican Council*.

In 1966, while completing his doctoral thesis, Fr. Cwiekowski joined the faculty at St. Mary's in Roland Park, where he taught systematic theology, served as a spiritual director, and later was rector for three challenging years in the wake of Vatican II.

As a professor, he was highly energetic, always well prepared, and demanding. One of his former students, Thomas Hurst, PSS, said "I found his enthusiasm for theology inspiring and contagious. His courses laid a solid foundation for further study, reflection, and prayer." Many of his former students can testify that they learned a lot in his classes. He gave good example of careful scholarship, loyalty to Catholic teaching, and intellectual balance. He was also highly regarded as a spiritual director and preacher, and, like his mentor Fr. Lee, he had a deep commitment to social justice.

After 25 years at St. Mary's, in 1991 Fr. Cwiekowski was transferred to St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, California, where he continued to teach



Above, Fr. Daniel Moore, PSS, Provincial and Fr. Phillip Brown, PSS, President-Rector of St. Mary's Seminary & University announce the establishment of the Fr. Frederick Cwiekowski Chair in Systematic Theology.

systematic theology and served as a formator. While there he wrote a second book on ecclesiology titled *The Beginnings of the Church*, published by Paulist Press in 1987.

After his retirement in 2009, he assisted part-time at St. Patrick's until 2014 when he moved to Catonsville, Maryland. Since then, he has assisted at local parishes and continued his theological research and writing.

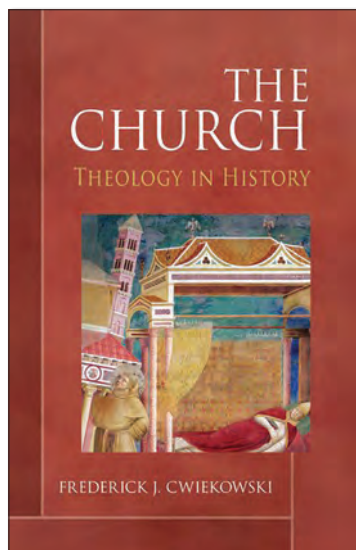
“Fred still conducts Bible study classes at a local parish, and the parishioners are in awe of his comprehensive and meticulous study of the Bible.”

— Rich Gula, PSS

In 2018, Liturgical Press published his third book, titled *The Church: Theology in History*.

For his many contributions to priestly formation, especially through his teaching and scholarship, the U.S. Province of the Sulpicians thanks Fr. Cwiekowski and congratulates him on the establishment of the Fr. Frederick Cwiekowski Chair in Systematic Theology.

Thomas R. Ulshafer, PSS



The U.S. Sulpician Mission in Africa

When I first arrived in Zambia in the spring of 1998 as Provincial of the U.S. Province, I found a vibrant young church, eager to move forward. Resources, however, were paltry. Not only were funds lacking, but also there was a dearth of native clergy formally trained for priestly formation. These factors led to the Province being invited by the Zambian bishops in 1989 to assist in that specialized ministry.

The Province originally sent two American Sulpicians as missionaries to Zambia, later supplemented by others. Within a few years, the bishops asked the Province to assume responsibility for the propaedeutic program at Emmaus Spirituality Centre in Lusaka. Then some years later, the first Zambian Sulpician, Cornelius Hankomoone, PSS, joined the Society.

Now, more than 37 years later, there are currently no American Sulpicians ministering in Zambia. However, there are 18 African members and candidates! Most are Zambians, but there is also one from Malawi and one from Botswana, neighboring countries.

In August 2025, I accompanied Mr. Jeff Trimmer, Director of Finance, on a visit to Zambia. We attended a 5-day meeting organized and managed by the African confreres to begin strategic planning for the future. What I witnessed was a real sign of hope. The African Sulpicians are taking up the mantle of their American confreres to plan responsibly for future priestly formation. Time, patience, and guidance will be needed, but I have confidence the mission, by God's grace, will succeed!

Ronald D. Witherup, PSS



Jeff Trimmer (left) and Fr. Patrick Simutowe, PSS, at the entrance to Emmaus.

Ron Witherup, PSS, and Jeff Trimmer Join the African Region Ongoing Formation

The Society of Saint Sulpice – African Region had, from August 13 to 17, 2025, convened at Protea Hotel, Chisamba, for its Strategic Planning meeting. It was a moment of enlightenment, interaction, renewal, adventure and relaxation—away from the city noise. In resonance with Rev. Ronald Witherup's presentation, the gathering was a perfect reflection of "collegiality," "synodality," and communion, which elements are pivotal in Sulpician life and ministry. The presence of Rev. Ronald Witherup, PSS, and Mr. Jeffrey R. Trimmer, Director of Finance, gave the gathering a much broader outlook.

The tranquil environment of Chisamba-Protea provided a great opportunity for interaction. The discussions, mealtimes, happy hour, and safari were, in themselves, interactive moments. As many of the confreres had not met Jeff before, interacting with him on a personal level made a huge difference. He is now known. It was gratifying to observe that none of the experiences during the program bored the two visitors. For Jeff, coming to Zambia, and Africa, for the first time was a visibly thrilling and enlightening experience. The trip improved his perception of

Zambia, as no amount of regret could be read on his face. With the numerous exhilarating experiences, he described the visit as "a trip of a lifetime." For Father Ron, the visit was yet another exciting and memorable experience among many other previous visits to Zambia.

The two were in attendance not as observers, but as active participants at the request of Fr. Moore—each with a topic for presentation. The meeting covered a variety of topics. Jeff gave an enlightening presentation on the Province's financial policies. Fr. Ron, right from his fingertips, gave an amazingly simplified summary of the history and charism of the Society of Saint Sulpice.

Overall, the presence of Fr. Ron and Jeff in Zambia in August 2025, gave hope for strengthened collegiality and unity of purpose; it exemplified a spirit of support, recognition and appreciation of the diverse initiatives of the African Region, by the Province. It was indeed a gathering that reflected the true spirit of Fr. Olier.

Eugene H. Mwanza, PSS

Archbishop Gian Luca Perici's Visit to Emmaus Spirituality Centre, Lusaka: A day of Communion and Joy

On October 5, 2025, Archbishop Gian Luca Perici, the Apostolic Nuncio to Zambia and Malawi, graced Emmaus Spirituality Centre in Lusaka, with his presence. This was the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time. The visit underscored communion with the universal Church. The visit left an indelible mark of warmth and encouragement on both the faculty as well as the seminarians.

Mass of the 27th Sunday

The day's highlight began with the celebration of the Mass by His Excellency, Archbishop Perici. The Eucharistic celebration drew the faculty members, religious sisters and lay auxiliary staff, fostering a sense of communion central to the Church's mission. In his homily, he underscored the importance of love for one's vocation, faithfulness, and service to the church. In brief, he also highlighted his role as both diplomatic and spiritual bridge-building between the Holy See and local churches.

Brief meeting with faculty members

Immediately after mass, the Nuncio was ushered into the Staff lounge for a brief meeting. The Acting Rector, Fr. Shikaputo, welcomed him once again, introduced the members of staff, and briefly explained to him the core pillars of formation and the daily routine of the seminary. The Nuncio appreciated the diversity of the faculty and encouraged them to continue the good work of formation of the future priests.

Tour of Emmaus Spirituality Centre

He appreciated the spaces dedicated to prayer, the library, classroom, sports facilities, entertainment spaces, and sleeping quarters of the students. He expressed satisfaction with the facilities at the Centre.



Lunch Spiced up with Entertainment

The interaction continued with a luncheon that was, vibrantly enlivened by entertainment courtesy of seminarians. Their musical and cultural performances added joy, reflecting the vibrancy of Zambia's rich cultural diversity. The Nuncio's evident delight underscored the importance of nurturing vocations and youthful energy of the seminarians.

In conclusion, the visibly delighted Italian prelate expressed his gratitude for the wonderful reception, the meal, energy and youthfulness of the seminarians and promised to return whenever possible.

Alick-George Ngosa, PSS
Acting Vice Rector



St. Anthony's Major Seminary Welcomes Patrick Badou, PSS and bids farewell to Julien Zossou, PSS



Fr. Julien Zossou's farewell to the seminarians

A Farewell Eucharist celebration was held June 13, 2025, marking a special meal for Fr. Julien Zossou, PSS, who joined St. Anthony's Major Seminary in 2018. Fr. Julien's presence in St. Anthony's Seminary is a fruit of the cordial Interprovincial collaboration between the French and US provinces of the Society of St. Sulpice. The seminary faculty and students joined hands in applauding Fr. Julien as a consistent and untiring seminary formator. We experienced Fr. Julien as orderly, disciplined, prayerful, and having a sense of humour which came at a time when nobody expected. The faculty and students will miss him deeply.

On September 9, 2025, St Anthony's Major Seminary witnessed the arrival of Fr. Patrick Modeste Badou, PSS. Fr. Patrick was born on November 20, 1974, in Littoral, Cotonou, Benin Republic. Ordained a priest in 2004 for the Catholic Archdiocese of Cotonou, he discerned his vocation to the Society of St. Sulpice in 2010 after doing his Master's Degree in Spain. He then had his year of "*La Solitude*" in 2014 in Canada. In July 2014, Fr. Badou defended his Doctoral Degree in Theology specialized in Dogmatic Theology from the Faculty of Theology of Northern Spain (Burgos Campus). Fr. Patrick served as a formator at Séminaire Saint Sulpice d'Issy-Les-Moulineaux and St. Sulpice Parish in France for a year. He then joined the major and theological seminary of *Grand Séminaire Saint-Gall de Ouidah in Benin* as a formator from 2015 to 2025. At the same time, he served as Episcopal Vicar for the Clergy for two terms, taking care of 450 priests of his home diocese of Cotonou from 2017 to 2023. He also held the position of the Formator of Formators between Togo and Bènin.



After the Farewell Eucharistic Celebration are, left to right: Fr. Enoch Kanjira, PSS, Rector; Fr. Julien Zossou, PSS; and Fr. Victor Shikaputo, PSS, Regional Superior

Fr. Badou brings with him a wealth of experience in seminary formation, formation of formators and leadership. He is a fluent speaker of three languages, French, English, Spanish, and some Italian. He is a passionate person in what he does, spicing his serious moments with a cheerful personality. He speaks with a lot of conviction and deep faith, combined with a listening attitude. We wish Fr. Patrick Badou a fruitful stay at St. Anthony's Major Seminary, Kachebere in Malawi.

Enoch Kanjira, PSS
Rector, St. Anthony's Major Seminary



Fr. Patrick Badou, PSS (left), and Fr. Enoch Kanjira, PSS

Nam Kim, PSS, Serves as Pastor at St. Gertrude in Stockton, California

Fr. Nam Kim, PSS, is a priest of the Diocese of El Paso, Texas. He has been a Sulpician for twenty-five years and has served in Sulpician seminaries in both the United States and Canada. He has also served as the Parochial Vicar in parishes in both Texas and California. He is presently serving his fifth year as the pastor of St. Gertrude, a poor parish in the rough part of downtown Stockton, California. He is the only priest serving this parish that once had four priests on the staff.

Given the variety of assignments and geographical locations in which Fr. Kim has served, he has learned to adjust to the challenges of the multicultural environments of his various assignments. His assignments have enabled him to hone his language skills to be conversant in both Spanish and English.

His cultural flexibility and language skills have been put to great use in serving the nearly 6,000 parishioners of St. Gertrude, a parish that is 95 percent Hispanic. All weekday Masses and four on Sunday are in Spanish. Only



Nam Kim, PSS celebrates mass at St. Gertrude

two Masses each week are in English. Many of the parishioners are seasonal farm workers with a limited income. One of the great challenges Fr. Kim faces is to manage the parish income with great frugality. He focuses on essentials and avoids extravagance. His parish house is very modest. Over his five years at the parish, he has directed his limited resources

to making needed improvements in the church (windows, floors, bathrooms, air conditioning) and in the security of the property which is frequently threatened by vandalism and vagrancy. Listening with compassion and dealing sensitively with conflict have been his keys to success.

Richard M. Gula, PSS

Ministry after Retirement: the Case of Richard M. Gula, PSS

A priest of the Diocese of Erie and a Sulpician for fifty-two years, Fr. Gula is best known for his decades as a professor of moral theology and for his many publications in that field. As his final assignment before retirement, he served very diligently and effectively for 11 years as the director of personnel services for the Sulpicians.

So, when he retired in 2022, some wondered if he would have enough to do to keep himself busy. They should not have worried. Fr. Rich chose to live in retirement at the Charlestown Retirement Community in Catonsville, Maryland, right next door to the Sulpician retirement residence. He chose to live at Charlestown partly because it offers its residents many opportunities to stay active and continue to be involved in the lives of others.

Shortly after he moved in, Fr. Rich signed up as a volunteer for Gilchrist, Maryland's leading nonprofit



provider of care for dying. Founded in 1994, Gilchrist offers hospice care, care for the elderly who are seriously ill, and counselling and support for caregivers and those who have lost loved ones.

As a Gilchrist volunteer, Fr. Rich has been visiting residents of Charlestown who are in Gilchrist's hospice program. He gives an average of about 10 hours of service each week. After a year of service, he was trained as an end-of-life support companion and, more recently, took specialized training to be a Gilchrist grief companion. In addition to his work for Gilchrist, Fr. Rich is also engaged in many Charlestown activities. For example, last spring he gave a Lenten series at the local Catholic parish. The following quotation captures his recent years: "Retirement is not the end of the road. It is the beginning of the open highway."

Thomas Ulshafer, PSS

50th Anniversary of the Canonization of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

During my current sabbatical year, I have been able to visit the shrines of men and women of the United States who have been canonized or beatified. That series of pilgrimages began with the first U.S. citizen to be canonized, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

My visit to her shrine in Emmitsburg, Maryland, coincided with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of her canonization. The three-day festival, held on September 12 to 14, 2025,



culminated with the anniversary Mass on Sunday. Nearly 3,000 pilgrims participated in the weekend celebration.

Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore presided and preached at the anniversary Mass. Several bishops and religious superiors and scores of priests concelebrated the Mass that filled the chapel and spilled over onto the grounds of the shrine.

Mother Seton was born in New York on August 28, 1774. She married in 1794 but was widowed nine years later, having given birth to five children. A practicing Episcopal Christian throughout the early years of life and her marriage, she discovered Catholicism in Italy, where her husband had died. She was received into the Catholic Church in New York in 1805.

At the invitation of Louis William Valentine DuBourg, PSS, she moved to Baltimore with her children to establish a boarding school on the grounds of St. Mary's Seminary on Paca Street. She resided there for one year (1808) before moving to a larger property in Emmitsburg. There she continued to receive support and guidance from other Sulpician priests for several years. It was in Emmitsburg that her fledgling religious community, the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's (later the Daughters of Charity), grew and flourished.

During this year when the United States celebrates its 250th birthday as a nation, it is good to remember the witness of our first native-born saint.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us.

James Myers, PSS

W Candidate Profile

Fr. Martin Gallagher

Fr. Martin Gallagher is a priest candidate for the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States. As a priest of the Diocese of Buffalo, New York, he is beginning his period of candidacy at Theological College. After attending the diocesan seminary of Christ the King, he was ordained in 2017 and has worked primarily in parish ministry.

Fr. Martin grew up in Buffalo, along with his parents, sister, and two brothers. After high school, he attended SUNY Fredonia and studied sociology with an anthropology concentration. After college, he taught English in Japan for two years. Living in the northern prefecture of Iwate, Fr. Martin worked in elementary and junior high schools. After returning to the United States, he began his studies for the diocesan priesthood in 2010.

During his time in pastoral ministry, Fr. Martin served as parochial vicar, temporary administrator, pastor, parish administrator, and school chaplain. He gave many presentations to parish groups, as well as retreats and days of reflection at different churches. The topics covered in these sessions, for the ongoing catechesis and formation of the laity, involved the lives of the saints, the sacraments, liturgy, sacred art and

architecture, iconography, the Eastern churches, *lectio divina*, and various Marian devotions. Fr. Martin has ministered at eight different parishes, completed Clinical Pastoral Education, assisted extensively in the diocesan program for the OCIA, and provided liturgical and sacramental assistance to a Carmelite monastery.

Reflecting on the important work of priestly formation, and remembering the good example of many priests, diocesan and religious, Fr. Martin wishes to assist in this vital work. Having an interest in patristics and church history, he hopes to begin studies after the period of candidacy and to contribute to the ongoing Sulpician mission here in the United States.

Fr. Martin has been doing well in his work as a formator and faculty member at Theological College and has been a wonderful Sulpician community member. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated priest to join us in our ministry here at Theological College!

James L. McKearney, PSS



M Sulpicians in Studies

Peter Kwaleyela, PSS



Transitioning from administration to school has been a moment of adjustment and learning to adjust, knowing well what lies ahead in terms of continuing in the work of initial formation of future priests, that is, the work of accompaniment of seminarians in spiritual direction and teaching.

My transition into school at St. Patrick's Pontifical University (SPPU), Maynooth, as a full-time Doctorate in Philosophy student has been one characterized by a focus on relationship-building with peers and staff engaged in academia. The post-graduate program at St. Patrick's has a dedicated general support service of student mentoring that literally makes you feel part of the SPPU family and that has helped me have the best possible experience.

My research is in philosophical phenomenology of Edith Stein, also known as St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, a German philosopher who converted to Catholicism and became a Discalced Carmelite nun. My research focuses on the distinction between motivation and psychic causality. Last summer afforded me the opportunity to learn the German *Ausgabe* as a tool to understand Stein's collected works. Philosophy, being about meaning and purpose, I look forward in my research, to bringing out new knowledge that shall respond to questions of ultimate human significance in as far as ontology and Artificial Intelligence interact.

This opportunity to deepen my academic formation, shall equip me with adaptability in creative problem solving and team-based collaboration. I wish to thank the Council for the opportunity to pursue a doctorate in this field of philosophy.

Thus far, I am fostering a positive school culture. I am happy with and looking forward to completing in the stipulated timeframe.

Peter Kwaleyela, PSS

Victor Simutonga, PSS

I'm studying for a Licentiate in Philosophy at St. Patrick's Pontifical University in Ireland at Maynooth. It is indeed an extremely different experience for me to make a transition from teaching to being a student myself. The class assignments I used to give to my students at Kachebere Major Seminary and Emmaus Spirituality Centre are now given to me by someone else. This experience gives me some anxiety but

also the impetus to get my assignments done on time, it's quite a challenge but interesting at the same time.

Maynooth University boasts of its academic excellence; both professors and students are committed to the academic ethos of the university. This alone is enough motivation for me to work extra hard in my academics. My experience at St. Patrick's Pontifical University is an interesting one in so many ways. The first thing that fascinates me is the beauty of the university itself in terms of its infrastructure. The architectural design of this university is magnificent; it's impressive to see.

Maynooth University is a large community of about 16,000 students coming from across the globe. This brings about cultural diversity much like our Sulpician family set up. I'm learning a lot of things from these different cultures; their way of life in terms of values and morals and their view of reality. Despite these cultural differences, it is interesting to note that Maynooth University enjoys unity in diversity; everyone does whatever they are supposed to do without infringing on the rights and freedoms of others. I have also come to learn that the Catholic Ethos at Maynooth is held in high esteem; Mass is celebrated every day during the week, and everyone is free to attend.

Maynooth University reflects my Sulpician experience in many ways, its commitment to unity in diversity, to prayer and academic excellence. Being in a multi-cultural and diverse community, presents the interesting challenge to evince not only my priestly, but Sulpician identity!



Victor Simutonga, PSS

M 100th Anniversary Sabbatical



Priests are increasingly responsible for multiple parishes. The demand for their pastoral and administrative ministry swells while the fund of their time and energy does not compound. The situation bears on their physical, psychological and spiritual health. The neglect of investment in self-care, intellectual nourishment, and spiritual practice will ultimately affect the quality of their ministry. At the core of a life-giving ministry is serious engagement with the Word of God which, when exercised with devotion and intellectual rigor, is deeply arduous but fulfilling.

I decided that my sabbatical year should make a modest contribution to the ministry of preaching of the busy parish priest. I wanted to write a commentary on the Gospel of Mark that distills biblical scholarship into a brief and readable text with suggestions for homiletic purposes. To prepare myself for the humbling task, I spent two months in library research at St. Mary's Seminary & University. I focused on the latest scholarship on the socio-political context of Mark. Armed with my deepened acquaintance with life-issues that the Markan author was addressing and my personal collection of books, I flew to the Philippines where the quiet and comfort of home would provide me the environment for thought and writing. I have never been more fulfilled than those eight months.

An added blessing was to have spent time with my mother during the last three months of her earthly life. Having left home for seminary at thirteen, I had never spent so much time with her as an adult. It was beautiful to sip my morning cup of coffee as she ate her breakfast and my evening glass of wine as she ate her dinner. Her passing was devastating, but the memory of our time together eases the pain.

The 800-kilometer Camino Francés crowned my sabbatical year. The exhaustion and pain of walking at least twenty kilometers a day gave me a deeper insight into my vulnerability and ultimate nothingness. But the beauty of the Spanish countryside, the easy friendliness of fellow pilgrims and their generosity to share the

innermost movements of their hearts gave me a greater appreciation for the gift and grace that life is. Grace never arrives to us unalloyed. Peace with self, others, and God is the destiny of life-long pilgrimage. On the way, we must be continually emptied to be filled.

René Lopez, PSS



Fr. Lopez and another pilgrim in front of The Cathedral of Santiago de Compostella, the endpoint of the pilgrimage.

Bbondo, a Small Village in the Diocese of Monze, Zambia



For the past two years, Fr. Cornelius Hankomoone, PSS, has served in Bbondo, a small village in his home Diocese of Monze, Zambia. This assignment marked a transition from his previous ministry in seminaries and his doctoral studies.

Long before joining the Sulpicians twenty-five years ago, Fr. Cornelius was committed to furthering the inculturation of Catholicism in Zambia, and this commitment motivated him to accept this pastoral opportunity. With the support of his bishop, Rt. Rev. Raphael Mweempwa, he chose Bbondo, a parish lacking basic infrastructure. Despite these challenges, he was drawn to the community's strong traditional culture.

Upon arrival, Fr. Cornelius focused on building relationships and addressing urgent needs. He raised funds to drill a well, install solar power, and construct a rectory, enabling sustainable parish life and allowing him to focus on his main project.

Since then, his primary goal has been to narrow the gap between Catholic funeral practices and traditional tribal funeral rituals, which are usually held separately and lack a Christian dimension. He used a book he authored in his tribal language to educate lay leaders and, with the bishop's support, shared it with other priests. Some of them have shown strong interest, and he is discussing how the priests of the diocese might continue the project after he returns to seminary ministry.

When he returns to the seminary, he will be bringing with him a deeper pastoral sensitivity that may add value to the formation of future priests. In the African set up, bishops not only need formators with pontifical degrees, but also need formators who have a rich pastoral experience. This is what Fr. Cornelius will be bringing back to the seminary at the end of this program in Bbondo.

Thomas Ulshafer, PSS

(Continued from Page 1)

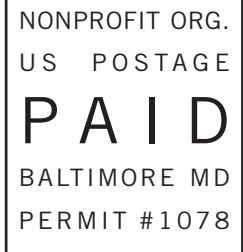
challenges, and successes, providence, and possibilities. We, too, as do most successful enterprises, routinely assess mission and ministries, i.e., diverse possibilities and sustained purpose.

During a previous Sulpician convocation and the Provincial Assembly that followed in May 2022, the juxtaposition of mission & maintenance was preeminent in some discussions. An obvious tension pervaded these same debates. Today we have a better perspective. Like Father Olier, imbued with Pentecost's Fire, i.e., *apostolic spirit*, in the mid-17th century, we, graced with similar passion, i.e., *apostolic zeal*, stand poised in the second quarter of the 21st century, ready to grapple with issues not unlike those that Father Olier's *la petite compagnie* encountered in the late 18th century. We share similar challenges as we consider how we may better serve mission and in doing so better serve the Church.

In the years that followed, the Provincial Council occasionally engaged the mission & maintenance debate. However, in thoughtful reflection and collegial dialogue with local Sulpician councils, we wisely transcended the "red herring debate" to embrace *mission*. In doing so the province harnessed an energy facilitated by the Spirit's persistent prompting and *our* (individually and collectively) commitment to mission, *our* tenacity in the face of challenge, *our* strength of character, and perseverance amid controversies—whirling around priesthood and priestly formation today.

Update

Society of St. Sulpice
Province of the U.S.
5408 Roland Ave.
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This *bold fidelity* emboldened the Provincial Council more recently to embrace, anew, the strategic, synodal juxtaposition of visioning and planning.

On December 3, 2025, the Provincial Council guided by a highly regarded facilitator engaged in a strategic planning discussion, the fruit of months of conversation and consultation, to better position and enhance *the Province's digital presence* in the vast e-matrix of social media and online platforms, swirling around us and our stakeholders, i.e., the bishops, diocesan vocation directors, and seminarians—not to mention, our alumni, our Sulpician confreres, as well as young discerners and seasoned veterans, men & women religious, lay men & women, families and friends. ...In a word, *the Church*.

Therefore, to accomplish our overall objective, we creatively enhanced three strategic initiatives:

1. Evangelization in the 21st century. *Go & Teach*.
2. Formal Priestly Discernment in a Sulpician Diocesan Seminary. *Come & Learn*.
3. Accompaniment. "Call others to follow." *Join us!* A "vocation within a vocation" in the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States, to better serve our unique mission and ministries, the initial and ongoing formation of diocesan priests in the 21st century and beyond!

Here then lie our current challenges, our opportunities, our goals.

"...Once more into the breach, dear friends! Once more!"

Shakespeare's Henry V in France at Havre Fleur



Update is also available on the Sulpician website at www.sulpicians.org