



News from the Province

Congregation of Holy Cross

Midwest Province of Brothers

September-October 2002

Provincial Council

The provincial council met on Saturday, September 28th. At the meeting, Brother Donald Gibbs informed the council members that Father Hugh Cleary, superior general, has accepted his resignation from the position of provincial superior. Brother Robert Fillmore, assistant provincial and vicar, will become the acting provincial until elections can be held and the new provincial superior takes office. The process for election will be announced after consultation with the superior general and his council.

The provincial council approved the constitution of the house council for Columba Hall. The elected members of the council are Brothers Thomas Balaz and Vincentius Balog. Brother Thomas Shaughnessy, local superior, appointed Brother James Bluma as assistant superior and Father Maurice Amen and Brother Gregory Teodecki as council members.

The corporate members of Holy Cross College met during the provincial council meeting. The corporate members approved the construction of a student apartment building on the college campus to be located on the college property.

Audit Report

Ms. Pam McClelland of Kerber, Eck and Braeckel, LLP, reviewed with the council members the audit of the Brothers of Holy Cross, Andre Residential Services and Holy Cross Village. The Brothers of Holy Cross utilized just under \$625,000 from the investment side of the Life Development Trust. However, fundraising for the addition and renovations at Dujarie House and activity at Holy Cross Village were very positive, so the results of the combined balance sheet for the fiscal year were positive. Brother William Dygert noted that a financial summary of the audit will be mailed to all members of the province within two weeks. A copy of the complete audit report is available to any member who would like one. The auditors complimented Curtis Coffey, Controller, and Brother William Dygert, Provincial Steward, for their efforts in the management of the province's finances. In accepting the audit, the provincial council also commended Curtis Coffey and Brother William. The council members expressed appreciation to Brother Donald Gibbs, Provincial and Jerry Kearns, Development Director for their work in fundraising for the province.

Provincial Chapter

The provincial chapter will take place on the Notre Dame Campus from June 22 to June 28, 2003. The chapter sessions will be held in DeBartolo Hall and chapter participants will be lodged in a student residence hall located near by. The actual hall will be determined in January 2003. Meals during the chapter will be served in the South Dining Hall.

Province members who have indicated they will attend the chapter as delegates are:

Br. Donald Allen	Br. Charles Gregg	Br. Jerome Meyer
Br. Philip Armstrong	Br. James Greteman	Br. Eduardo Michalik
Br. Richard Armstrong	Br. Kenneth Haders	Br. Thomas Minta
Br. Joseph Berg	Br. Rex Hennel	Br. Robert Mosher
Br. Robert Berthiaume	Br. Donald Johnroe	Br. Isaac Jogues Motz
Br. James Bluma	Br. Richard Johnson	Br. Timothy O'Connell
Br. Francis Boylan	Br. Kenneth Kane	Br. Raymond Papenfuss
Br. Lewis Brazil	Br. Paul Kelly	Br. Carlos Parrilla
Br. Clement Burger	Br. Robert Kelly	Br. Bernard Platte
Br. Thomas Cunningham	Br. Charles Krupp	Br. Frederick Raehsler
Br. Bernard Donahoe	Br. Barry Lambour	Br. Paul Rosonke
Br. Charles Drevon	Br. Robert Lavelle	Br. Francis Rotsaert
Br. Christopher Dreyer	Br. Joseph LeBon	Br. Carl Shonk
Br. Raymond Dufresne	Br. James Leik	Br. Lawrence Skitzki
Br. William Dygert	Br. Edward Libbers	Br. Philip Smith
Br. Guy Eckels	Br. Robert Livernois	Br. Roy Smith
Br. Robert Fillmore	Br. Robert Ludwig	Br. James Spooner
Br. Donald Fleischhacker	Br. Thomas Maddix	Br. Donald Stabrowski
Br. Edward Foken	Br. David Martin	Br. Donard Steffes
Br. Joseph Fox	Br. John May	Br. Carl Sternberg
Br. Chester Freel	Br. Charles McBride	Br. James Sullivan
Br. William Geenen	Br. Joseph Mc Taggart	Br. Lawrence Unfried
Br. Richard Gilman	Br. Francis Meduri	Br. James Van Dyke
Br. Peter Graham	Br. Paul Mensah	
Br. Shaun Gray	Br. William Mewes	

Observers at the provincial chapter are

Br. John Affum	Br. Walter Gluhm	Br. James Rottenbucher
Br. Thomas Balaz	Br. John Kuhn	Br. Harold Ruplinger
Br. Joseph Ballard	Br. James Kumba	Br. Richard Shea
Br. Roger Berg	Br. Donald McIntyre	Br. Lawrence Stewart
Br. Robert Dierker	Br. Donald Morgan	Br. John Stout
Br. Walter Foken	Br. James Newberry	Br. Rudolph Talaga
Br. William Gates	Br. James Reddy	Br. Edward Wauchter

Upon the completion of the fall regional meetings the chapter delegates will give their preferences for the chapter committees on which they wish to serve. There will be four committees for the chapter: community life, mission and ministry, restructuring and finances. The committee chairs will be elected upon the completion of the fall regional meetings. The chairs of each of these committees, the provincial and one other person appointed by the provincial will form the planning committee for the chapter. The planning committee will then be proposed to the provincial chapter in June for approval as the chapter steering committee.

Conference of Major Superiors Meeting

Brother Donald Gibbs and Brother Robert Fillmore attended the meeting of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) held in Philadelphia from August 7-10. Much of the meeting was devoted to discussions concerning the sexual abuse crisis in the Church and how religious communities are to respond to allegations brought against members. At the end of the conference, the CMSM members endorsed the statement:

Improving Pastoral Care and Our Accountability in Response to the Tragedy of Sexual Abuse. The statement is attached to the newsletter.

The United States Holy Cross provincials met before the CMSM meeting with representatives of Christian Brothers Services and with a consulting firm (Praesidium) that develops abuse prevention safety plans. Both groups reviewed the provinces' policies on sexual abuse. The provincials will meet later to update these policies in the light of the CMSM statement and the suggestions received by the Christian Brothers' Services.

Holy Cross Village Planning Committee

The Holy Cross Village Planning Committee held its first meeting on September 6, 2002. The committee, established by the provincial, has as its purpose to present to the chapter committee dealing with the village recommendations for future development. The committee also seeks input from province members for the future of the village. The committee members are Brothers Thomas Shaughnessy, chair, Robert Lavelle, James Van Dyke, Joseph Fox, John May, Frank Macknick of the Holy Cross Village Office, Mark Maurer, Facilities Manager, and Steven Kastner, Administrator of Andre Residential Services. Brother Robert Fillmore is also a member of the committee and serves as liaison with the provincial administration. The committee met a second time on September 27. The committee plans to send a summary of its meetings to province members through the MWNet.

Congregational Day of Fast and Prayer

September 13 was the annual congregational day of fast and prayer for justice and peace. This was a day of remembering the members of the congregation who have died as victims of violence or who have given their lives in the pursuit of justice and peace (1998 General Chapter Recommendation). Holy Cross religious throughout the world were asked to donate money saved through fasting to the general administration for justice and peace projects. This year the money collected is to assist the Holy Cross Skills Training Center in Ghana, West Africa. Thanks to the generosity of province members \$1,458 was raised to help support this effort. Special recognition goes to the Brothers at Columba Hall who raised \$800 and the students of Holy Cross High School, River Grove who donated \$300.

From the Vocation Office

The Vocations Office once again asks for your prayers as a new academic year begins. This year three *Come and See* vocation discernment weekends will be held at Columba Hall on the Notre Dame campus. High school juniors and seniors will be invited to visit during the weekends of November 8-12, 2002, February 21-23, 2003, and April 11-13, 2003. They will have an opportunity to get acquainted with the local community and to reflect together on the possibility of a religious vocation. Having participated in these weekend retreats in the past, a number of students are now considering the candidacy program and are enrolled at Holy Cross College. One student, a graduate of Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron, was accepted in the Old College program at Notre Dame to begin his candidacy with the Indiana Province.

During the past year, in an effort to promote vocations in Holy Cross high schools in Illinois and Ohio, Brother Carlos Parrilla, vocation director for the province, and Father Bill Wack of the Indiana Province vocations office twice visited Holy Trinity High School in Chicago, Holy Cross High School in River Grove, and Notre Dame High School in Niles. They also visited Gilmour Academy, St. Edward High School, and Archbishop Hoban High School in Ohio. The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend invited Brother Carlos and Brother Donald Gibbs to participate in panels on vocations at St. Joseph's High School and Marian High School in

South Bend, and at Bishop Luers High School and Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne. The Archdiocese of Detroit also invited Brother Carlos to visit Gabriel Richard High School, where he joined a vocation panel composed of members of different religious orders and the diocesan clergy. The student responses at these schools were most encouraging. These same schools will be visited again during the ensuing year.

At the invitation of the Cleveland Diocesan Vocation Office, Brother Carlos took part in vocation awareness days conducted in various grade schools in Lorain, Ohio. In August he was a staff member for the Vocation Awareness Weekend sponsored by the Fort Wayne-South Bend Serra Club for young men and women interested in religious and priestly vocations.

The Vocation Office presently maintains a mailing list of high school students and young adult men interested in the religious life as Brothers of Holy Cross.

Robbie Davidson and Charles Riffert, the two Midwest Province candidates, have returned for their sophomore year at the Old College residence on the Notre Dame campus. After a summer of creative activities, they joined their peers from the Old College and Moreau Seminary at the Indiana Province summer camp at Deer Park, Maryland. The group gathered for a week of orientation and retreat. The week's events were interspersed with other activities such as volleyball, bacci ball, card games, swimming, boating, canoeing, water skiing, and trips to Washington, D.C. and to Pittsburgh, Gettysburg, and Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Robbie Davidson continues to remain active as an Eagle Scout and as a debater. He spent most of his summer at home in Evansville, Indiana as a painter for a realty company. After having completed his freshman year at Holy Cross College, he was admitted to the University of Notre Dame, where he will continue his undergraduate studies.

Charles Riffert spent most of his summer on campus at Notre Dame, where he worked for six weeks with the ND Vision Project. He volunteered at the beginning of the summer in Monterrey, Nuevo León, México, where he contributed time and effort among the poor people of that area. Charles began his sophomore year at Holy Cross College after having visited with his family in Evansville.

Holy Cross Associates Grow in Faith and Vision

They came from across the country and from Ghana, West Africa to attend the third bi-annual Midwest Holy Cross Associates assembly from July 26 to July 28 at Fatima Retreat House, Notre Dame. They were fifty strong. Their faith in God's continuing call and their identification with the spirituality and vision of Holy Cross motivated them to come together in brotherhood and sisterhood. Their time together deepened their faith and provided an opportunity for them to share dreams of future possibilities.

Prayer, discussions and input sessions reinforced the sense that God is bringing new life to the Church. In their study of the Constitutions of Holy Cross and in their discovery of the spirit of Holy Cross through contact with members of the community, they found new meaning and direction in their spiritual life. With a revitalized personal faith, they began to envision themselves becoming an extension of the community's ministries in such ways as promoting vocations, becoming leaders in parish councils, developing lay leadership programs, forming prayer groups imbued with Holy Cross spirituality and serving as volunteers to meet special needs of the community.

Fr. John Phalen, C.S.C., director of Holy Cross Family Ministries, along with three staff members, Fr. Jack Geracci of the Eastern Priests' Province, and John and Victoria Assan, leaders of the Ghana Associates and their moderator, Br. Michael Amakyi, were among the special guests. Representatives came from California,

Illinois, Minnesota and New Jersey. Some participants represented eight years experience as Holy Cross Associates.

News From Ghana

Sunday, July 14, was a joyful day for Holy Cross in Ghana. Four men received the Brother's habit and were officially welcomed into the community as novices. The four novices, Brothers Francis Agyevi, Godfred Ashun, Robert Koomson and Nicholas Arthur, have since begun their novitiate formation under the direction of Brothers Nee Wayoe and Anthony Dadzie. During the Eucharistic Liturgy of the day, Brother Michael Amakyi, district superior, presented each of the novices his religious habit, a copy of the constitutions and a bible. Among the guests at the reception ceremony were a group of students from Holy Cross College. The students with their teacher, Mr. Robert Kloska, were visiting Ghana to learn more about Holy Cross ministries in the country.

Grey skies and the threat of rain on August 17 did not dampen in the least the spirits of the Holy Cross Community, local clergy and invited guests who gathered at Blessed Brother André Novitiate in Brafuyaw to celebrate the first profession of vows of Brothers Paul Bukari, Kenneth Goode and Vincent Insiful. During the Eucharistic Liturgy celebrated by Fr. Robert Gilmour (S) that featured the Brafuyaw Catholic Choir, the Brothers pronounced their vows before Brother Michael Amakyi. Special guests present at the profession were the families of the Brothers and representatives from the areas where they ministered as novices: the Ankorful Prisons where Brother Paul worked; the Cape Coast School for the Deaf where Brother Vincent ministered and the University Hospital where Brother Kenneth did his ministerial work.

We extend our hearty congratulations to the novices and newly professed in Ghana. We say to them "Akwabaa" (welcome) and assure them of our prayers as they continue their formation as religious of Holy Cross. At the same time, we offer our congratulations and gratitude to Brothers Nee and Anthony, novice directors, and to all in the district involved in the formation of new members for the congregation.

The Brothers hosted at their District Center in Brawfuyaw the Area VII Assembly of the Sisters of the Holy Cross from September 1st to September 4th. Holy Cross Sisters from East and West Africa met with the sisters' general council to prepare a vision statement and to discuss the challenges facing international religious congregations today. Among the speakers at the assembly were Mr. and Mrs. John Nimo who spoke on the role of the family and the laity. Sister Mary Margaret Nimo and Sister Stella Maris spoke about vocation promotion in Ghana and Uganda and Brother Michael Amakyi gave a presentation on how collaboration and the family of Holy Cross appeal to young Africans today. Father Robert Gilmour celebrated the opening liturgy during which Bishop John Darko of Sekondi-Takoradi gave the homily. Archbishop Peter Turkson of Cape Coast celebrated the closing liturgy on September 4th.

Forty-seven religious formators from 27 communities of men and women from 9 different countries met at the Holy Cross Formation Center, Brawfuyaw, from September 16th to the 24th. The focus of their meeting was the assessment of candidates for the religious life. The facilitators for the meeting were Sister Sheela, a Holy Spirit Sister from India, and Brother Vitus, a Marist Brother from Nigeria.

Andre Residential Services

A Clean Slate: Four staff members from the Indiana State Department of Health surveyed Dujarie House for three days in late July as part of the normal annual follow up to the licensure process. This type of survey, one that is unannounced, will occur each year as a regular practice. The results of the survey just concluded

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indicated that Dujarie House has literally no deficiencies. That means it was given a perfect rating. Fewer than 5% of long-term care facilities achieve this rating.

Resident Turnover: Dujarie House discharged 15 residents during the calendar year 2001. Of those, 6 returned to their religious house, proving once again that there is more than one way of leaving Dujarie House, contrary to gratuitous legends circulated in the earlier years.

As a matter of fact, the number of brothers availing themselves of the recuperative programs of Dujarie House appears to be growing each year. Their recovery accelerated by excellent care and superb accommodations, many more brothers than in the past return to the house from which they came and resume their usual activity.

Staff Longevity: Some staff members have been at Dujarie House long enough to know a considerable number of brothers, both residents and visitors. Becky Futa, Director of Nursing, has been at Dujarie House 24 years. Janet Holmer, cook, has been in the kitchen for 13 years. Sandy Moreland, a Qualified Medical Assistant, marks 13 years as well. Maureen Clemmons, Assistant Director of Nursing, has served for 10 years, as has Cindy Pietrzak, a Licensed Practical Nurse. Add that up if you will and see what loyalty and caring concern mean for the Dujarie residents.

Social Activities: Social activities are planned daily by Activity Director Jean Rogers and her assistant Judy Hagen for those residing at Andre Residential Services, Inc. There are daily fitness classes, varieties of musical entertainment by local musicians, visits from both the Humane Society with pets and from a Holy Cross Village resident whose dog is a certified canine therapist, a wood working class, jackpot Bingo (at which a few residents seem to experience incredible luck!), horseshoes, shuffleboard, a book club, and the usual regular gatherings for the liturgy, prayer and meals.

A Special Resident: As most know, Br. Edward Sniatecki, (EB) celebrated his 100th birthday on September 8, and his 80th anniversary of religious profession. Either figure is astonishing. He is the first Holy Cross religious ever to reach his 80th jubilee, and only a handful of his predecessors have marked the centenary of their birth. One more time, heartiest congratulations to Br. Edward, and our deep gratitude for his immense contributions to Holy Cross over all these years.

Bits and Pieces

Brother Roland Driscoll was featured in the summer quarterly Sacred Heart Cathedral publication in Knoxville, Tennessee. Reflecting on his 64 years as a Brother of Holy Cross, Brother Roland attributes his vocation to the influence of his parents who always put God first in their lives, the guidance of his pastor, the Sisters of Mercy who taught him for twelve years and his grandmother who regularly supported the Brothers' mission in India (now Bangladesh).

Divorce and Beyond, written by **Brother James Greteman** and Leon Haverkamp, has been translated into Spanish and is available through the Family Ministries Office, Chicago, IL. The book is expected to be translated into Polish next summer. The Paulist Press will publish another book by Brother James, *Primal Hurts*, in July 2003.

Brother Thomas Maddix published two articles recently. In the July/August 2002 edition of *Religious Life Review*, published by the Dominicans in Ireland, he has an article entitled: "Creating Desert Places: An Opportunity." In the May/June edition of *Health Progress* he did an interview entitled: "Inner and Outer Integrity." Brother Thomas was also a co-presenter with Sister Ann Patrick of the National Catholic School Social Services (Catholic University of America) at the joint meeting of Catholic Charities USA and the Catholic Health Association USA. They gave two presentations on the topic of organizational ethics and decision-making.

"A Lonely Little Petunia" is the title of an article written by **Brother Philip Armstrong** to be published in a future edition of *Review for*

Religious. In the article Brother Philip states that vowed commitment, especially the brotherhood, has in recent years been smothered like a single petunia in an onion patch redolent of exclusivity, even though after Vatican II suggestions were made to augment the status of religious in the Church. He proposes that vowed commitment in the religious life formally be declared a sacrament – as matrimony and holy orders already have been. Such an audacious move would surely enkindle renewed awareness of and interest in the religious life, especially that of the brother. Commenting on the article, Rev. David Fleming, S.J., editor of *Review for Religious*, writes: “We get stimulated in different ways at different times. Let us see what we might stir up at this time in the Church.”

Father Hugh Cleary, superior general, announced that **Brother Réginald Robert**, provincial of the Canadian Brothers' Province, has resigned for reasons of health. Father Cleary has appointed Brother Réjean Charrette, assistant provincial and vicar, to serve as provincial, completing Brother Réginald's term of office. Brother Réginald recently underwent bypass surgery and is in the midst of recovery. His term of office was to have expired in June 2003

Holy Cross Ordo for 2003

The congregational ordo for the liturgical year 2003 can be ordered through Rev. Peter Rocca, C.S.C. The cost is \$8.00. Individual Brothers desiring a copy can place their order directly through Father Rocca. Superiors and directors can do the same for the members of their local communities. When ordering, contact Rev. Peter Rocca, C.S.C., 409 Moreau Seminary, Notre Dame, IN 46556. Checks should be made out to the **Congregation of Holy Cross**, not to Father Rocca. Please place your order as soon as possible to ensure delivery in time for the new liturgical year.

Provincial Office Telephone Numbers

As of October 1 there are new numbers for calling the provincial office. Please check the 2002-2003 Province Directory when calling members of the provincial administration. The main number for the provincial office is **574-631-4000**. The new fax number is **574-631-2999**.

Prayers Requested

Please remember in your prayers the following who have died: Father Daniel Walsh (S), Father Thomas Lawton (EP), Father Marc Fitzgerald (I), Father Chester Soleta (I), Brother Raymond Cournoyer (CF), Brother Adrien Saint-Amand (CF), Czesto Mushi (I), Holy Cross seminarian in Nairobi, Kenya, Mary Day, sister of Brother Gonzaga Day, Paul Greteman, brother of Brother James Greteman, Edward Jakubczak, longtime staff member at Holy Trinity High School and Holy Cross High School, Mary Amma Dardoe, mother of Brother Daniel Dardoe and sister of Brother Joseph Tsiquaye.

Please remember also Brother Donald Bailer and Brother James Linscott who are both undergoing treatment for cancer.

Calendar of Coming Events

October 12	Regional meeting for West Coast region
October 19	Regional meeting for South Bend area
October 26-27	Provincial council meeting
November 3-9	Council of the Congregation, Uganda, East Africa
December 16-29	District chapter in Ghana, West Africa
January 25, 2003	Regional meeting for West Coast Region
February 1	Regional meeting for South Bend area
February 8-9	Provincial council meeting
February 15	Regional meeting for Chicago area
March 1	Regional meeting for Cleveland-Akron area
	Regional meeting for Texas-Florida region

March 15-16	Provincial council meeting
June 21	Province jubilee celebration
June 22-28	Provincial chapter

Book Review

THOUGHTS MATTER
and
TOOLS MATTER for PRACTICING the
SPIRITUAL LIFE
by Sr. Mary Margaret Funk, O.S.B.

(Continuum, NY, 1998, hardcover, 137 pages, footnotes, appendix, bibliography; and Continuum, NY, 2001, hardcover, 149 pages, endnotes, bibliography)

These two works on the traditions of the desert elders are authored by Sr. Mary Margaret Funk, former prioress of the Benedictine convent in Beech Grove, Indiana. In her Preface to the second book she says, "*Thoughts Matter* was my first attempt to retrieve and reclaim the wisdom tradition of the desert elders. The classic eight thoughts (food, sex, things, anger, dejection, acedia, vainglory, pride) that John Cassian wrote about in his *Institutes* and *Conferences* require practical tools for the serious seeker. In this second book, I have extracted those tools and found enhanced teachings about them that were lived out during later centuries, for example, the cell, fasting, manual labor, and ceaseless prayer. This book, *Tools Matter*, does what *Thoughts Matter* did but with practice rather than with thoughts. I found more than twenty-five practices that can be reappropriated today as tools to assist the contemplative seeker. This book is for those of us seeking spiritual direction."

The author in this way almost reviews her own books insofar as content and objective are concerned. There is a simplicity of approach that makes each book fairly easy to read; and because the reader knows precisely what is being addressed and its relation to the overall plan, there is no sense of ever being lost in the desert, whose forbidding geographical and meteorological starkness, along with its serious and spiritually motivated human dwellers, provide for the contemplative (and for those seeking to broaden the contemplative side of

their active life) with another set of practical helps in facing the challenges that life places before them on their way to God.

It is suggested the reader go through both books. If the first is read, the first two chapters of the second need but a cursory glance to refresh the memory as to the "thoughts" that advance the individual's ability to confront the eight *thoughts* of John Cassian established as the great challenges to advancement toward God. In short, the first book illustrates how conscious thoughts can be brought to bear on undesired thoughts inimical to one's progress. The second identifies instruments, or tools, of confrontation, for example, *negative* tools, *positive* tools, and *social* tools. Rather than deal head-on through the control of one's own thoughts with inimical thoughts in the eight categories identified by Cassian, the second approach is to utilize means external to the person. Sr. Mary Margaret says, "...Tools are just that; they are tools. They can help us live in God's presence. They can help us know God. But they are not revealed by God in Scripture. We can learn about them only from those who have gone before us. But it is we who must pick up these tools and use them for ourselves."

She goes on to give examples of such tools: "Fasting is an antidote for food; checking dreams and [the] manifestation of thoughts to an elder is an antidote for sex thoughts; staying in our cell helps us put things in order...manual labor moves out acedia..." And she reminds the reader that "some tools are used specifically to 'un-think,' while other tools are used to 'think' thoughts that replace the afflictive thoughts."

What may at first glance seem to be vague obscurity explained with fuzzy ambiguity is not, in fact, that at all. Sister proceeds in an orderly way to lead the reader through the process she recommends—which is, after all, based on the wisdom of the elders in the spiritual life. She was, as prioress, attempting to help simplify for her community of contemplative nuns that which seems so complex and impenetrable. And we are the beneficiaries of her analytical and synthesizing efforts. These books are not entertaining in the traditional sense; they are not meant to be. Some patience and perseverance are required to make your way through the content, brief though it may be in each book. Whether it is

thought worthwhile in the end will clearly be the judgment of the one seeking help in putting aside barriers in the path leading toward a closer relationship with God.

Though the focus is on the individual's weapons of war against the eight "thoughts" that stand in one's way, the underlying theme throughout both books is that the battle is not fought alone, ever, and that both human and divine assistance are available at all times if sought and heeded appreciatively.

And though these books address the monastic tradition more directly than the active form of religious life, there is none among us who cannot benefit from reminders of disciplines we may have been made familiar with during formation that are capable of aiding our growth in the spiritual life. These works call us to remember that though the millennium may have changed, some elements of spirituality remain constant and are thus worth our attention.

Br. Philip Armstrong, C.S.C.

Improving Pastoral Care and Accountability In Response to the Tragedy of Sexual Abuse

Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Annual Assembly, Philadelphia, PA
August 10, 2002

As leaders of the men's Catholic religious orders and societies of apostolic life with 21,000 priests and brothers in the United States, and consistent with our institutes' traditions and Gospel values, we are committed to the protection of children and young people.

We share in the anguish expressed by many Catholics and others over the issues of sexual abuse of minors by diocesan and religious priests, and by religious brothers. We are deeply moved by the stories of the victims and their families.

Sexual abuse of minors is abhorrent. When the abuser is a trusted member of church or society who holds himself out as a healer, the abuse is magnified. We share in the anger of betrayal. We attempt to reach out to victims with care and hope to rebuild the trust that has been lost. Often, these abusers were under our supervision or the supervision of our predecessors and this fills us with a painful sense of responsibility for what has occurred. We hope and pray that we have acted responsibly and too often find that our decisions have not lived up to the hopes and expectations of those who were abused and those whom we serve and work with in ministry. We are deeply sorry for that and publicly apologize for whenever and however we have failed victims or families.

We believe that in most instances over this last decade, as we have learned more about the tragic consequences of sexual abuse, we have acted responsibly in dealing with allegations. But, we have also heard the clear call to more accountability and transparency in how we as leaders of men religious deal with the protection of children from sexual abuse by members of our institutes and how we handle allegations of sexual abuse and follow-up outreach to victims and supervision of our members charged with sexual abuse.

Therefore, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men gathered in Assembly in Philadelphia from August 7-10, 2002, instructs the leadership of the Conference:

To research currently available services, design needed services, and provide them to its membership to enable them to have in place the **mechanisms to respond** promptly to any allegation of sexual abuse. These services will help them to have a competent assistance coordinator to aid in the immediate pastoral

care of persons who claim to have been abused by members of their institutes. These services could include methods of collaboration between institutes that are members of CMSM.

- To research and design further services whereby its member institutes can, either on their own or in union with others, establish an **independent review board**, the majority of whom will be laypersons not in the employ of those institutes. These boards will assess allegations, review regular institute policies and procedures for dealing with sexual abuse of minors, and advise the major superior on the offender's fitness for ministry. These boards will act retrospectively and prospectively on these matters and give advice on all aspects of responses required in connection with these cases.
- To research and design mechanisms of **public accountability** for US major superiors that would include a national review board made up of laypersons and others not involved in the leadership of CMSM institutes. The board shall review annually the implementation of sexual abuse policies in those CMSM institutes that subscribe for the service and make recommendations about their implementation in a published form.
- To seek consultation with an expert (or experts) in the protection of children for its service to membership, especially for educational programs for the **protection of children** and the prevention of sexual abuse of minors by those in their own institutes and in society at large.
- To research currently available service and resources, design needed services and provide them to its membership to respond promptly to the need for more effective **methods of intervention, care, treatment, and follow-up supervision** of institute members in need of treatment and continuing supervision for sexual abuse. These services could be designed to be implemented collaboratively among CMSM member institutes.
- To initiate **dialogue** with appropriate groups (Bishops, women religious, victims, professionals, abusers and others) for the creation of programs for healing, reconciliation and wellness for all those affected by sexual abuse.

These programs and services will be developed as soon as possible and made available to the membership.

Men's religious communities have already taken many steps to protect those in our care. Religious communities have developed careful guidelines for screening new candidates including intense psychological testing. For more than 12 years, CMSM has been encouraging and helping its members to review and update policies for professional conduct on a regular basis and to follow local, state and federal laws when dealing with abuse issues. The vast majority of our membership has done so. The members of CMSM continue to strongly support the five principles for dealing with situations of abuse offered by the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops in 1993.¹

Legal, psychological, and organizational policies can help reduce the number of future situations, but cannot fully address the deep and profound pain that our leaders feel over any abuse of the human person, especially the horror of sexual abuse of children. Religious priests or brothers who have molested children or adolescents have broken the bonds of trust invested in them. We feel this hurt deeply. We are also distressed and confused as to how men can harm young people in this way. We support all efforts to try to come to a better

¹ 1. Respond promptly to all allegations of abuse where there is reasonable belief that abuse has occurred. 2. If such an allegation is supported by sufficient evidence, relieve the alleged offender promptly of his ministerial duties and refer him for appropriate medical evaluation and intervention. 3. Comply with the obligations of civil law as regards reporting of the incident and cooperating with the investigation. 4. Reach out to the victims and their families and communicate sincere commitment to their spiritual and emotional well-being. 5. Within the confines of respect for privacy of the individuals involved, deal as openly as possible with the members of the community.

understanding of this proclivity, already aware that many of the abusers were themselves sexually abused as children. We strive to understand how we can spot the signs of this tendency early on before abuse occurs. Many of our congregations were founded precisely to care for children in schools, shelters, orphanages, in the inner city, or overseas. For many religious men, their very lives are lived out each day in sensitively caring for, teaching and protecting children. That this ministry could provide occasions for this kind of abuse overwhelms us with concern for the future.

Because of who we are as religious living lives in the witness of community, we are also called to compassionate responses to any among us who has committed this abuse. He is still our brother in Christ. We must share his burden. He remains a member of our family. Just as a family does not abandon a member convicted of serious crimes, we cannot turn our backs on our brother. If a religious has abused a child or adolescent, he is not only subject to civil and criminal law, but, according to the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* adopted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, he also cannot be reassigned to public ministries or be involved with young people. Though it may be long in coming, we must walk the journey with him through repentance, healing, forgiveness, and hopefully reconciliation.

But our compassion does not cloud our clarity. We abhor sexual abuse. We will not tolerate any type of abuse by our members. Our tradition of fraternal correction requires us to hold one another accountable. In addition to being a crime, sexual abuse of this type violates our most fundamental values as religious. Bearing our responsibility, we place these men under severe restrictions after treatment and those with the greatest danger to the public are carefully supervised to avoid occasions where they can engage in abuse again. In situations where dismissal is appropriate, due process will be respected. It is our agreed upon policy with the U.S. bishops confirmed by the Code of Canon Law that disclosures about our men must be made to the local bishop when assignment for ministry is sought, including any past occasions of sexual abuse. We honor the values and principles of the *Dallas Charter* and we seek to apply them to the unique situation of men's religious institutes in the Church. When the status of the *Essential Norms* is clarified, we look forward to dialogue with the Bishops on their application.

Because celibacy has been portrayed so negatively in some recent news reports, we want to say that celibacy in religious life is freely chosen as part of our commitment to life in community along with the vows of poverty and obedience. For us, this celibacy finds its source in the life and teachings of Jesus and in the most ancient traditions of our religious institutes. It is imposed by no one, and is rooted in the journey to God that is at the heart of monastic and religious life. Whatever happens with the discipline of celibacy that is associated with the diocesan priesthood, celibacy will remain a treasured feature of religious life. We see it as the ultimate witness to the holiness of sexuality, not as a flight from it or repression of it. We also have learned over many years that only those truly called to it can live it well and find the fullness of their human meaning in it. It is not meant for the faint of heart or for those fleeing the world.

In the Acts of the Apostles we read, "the community of believers were of one mind and one heart" (Acts 4:32). We are of one mind and one heart in our responsibility to care for our children. Though at times the well of anger surrounding this public debate seems bottomless and our hearts are deeply troubled by this betrayal, as religious we are committed to working, with parents, church leaders, civil society and all people of good will to restore the trust that has been lost, and to find what we need to learn from this tragedy, what it calls us to as people of faith and as a nation.

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