



ONE HEART, ONE SPIRIT

CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
PROVINCE OF THE UNITED STATES

Summer
2022

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Living into the Laudato Si' Action Platform

The Spiritans of the U.S. Province gathered for their Annual Retreat under the theme “Led by the Spirit: Living into the Laudato Si’ Action Platform.” Professed and Lay Spiritans from the United States, Nigeria, France, Ghana, Portugal, Capo Verde, Vietnam, Congo, and Tanzania, were in attendance.

The reflection was led, in part, by retreat directors Lissa Romell and Patricia Gillis. Lissa and Patty are actively involved with the Passionist Community and are both involved in their Laudato Si’ Vision Fulfillment Team.

A focus of the week was the connections between the “Laudato Si’ Action Platform” and Spiritan Spirituality. Because the poor are typically on the front line of the negative impact of climate change, the connection between the Spiritan rule of life and care for the earth is clear.

The encyclical phrases it this way: “We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrat-

ed approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.” (LS §139)

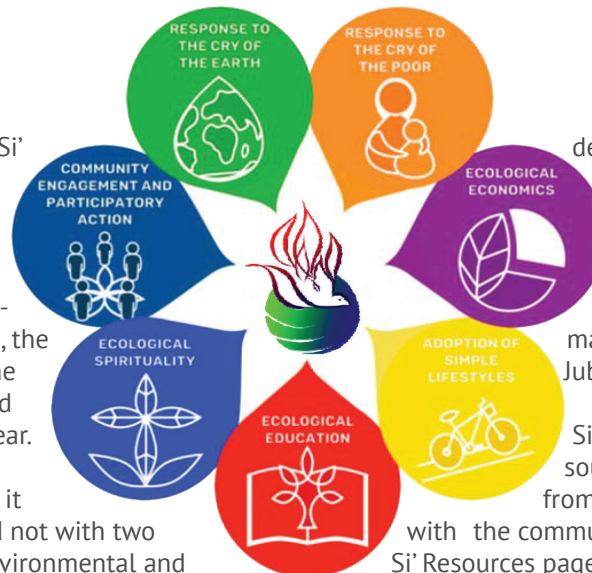
Throughout the week, the retreat attendees dug deeper into the Laudato Si Action Platform, discussed their unexamined assumptions about western culture, learned about ways the Spiritans are already living out the platform and discussed ways they could do more. They also actively practiced living more sustainably

by only eating meat at 1 meal per day during the retreat.

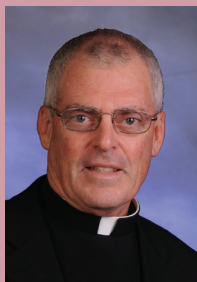
Other portions of the retreat included a mass in remembrance of the deceased family members of the attendees, a visit to an urban community farming project, a cultural celebration of song and dance, and a mass honoring this year’s Jubilarians.

Since the retreat, the resources and presentations from the week were shared with the community, and a Laudato Si’ Resources page was created on the Spiritan website. Now the congregation is establishing plans for personal, community, and province-wide animation for these goals.

Laudato Si’ Action Platform Goals



Welcome



Our recent Annual Retreat was a great reminder of how much we all are connected. Our actions, as individuals and as a community, affect other people and the environment. Too often we act without remembering the effect of our action.

As we discern how to best live out the Laudato Si' Action platform, we are asked to look closely at

how we interact with the world around us. Specifically, we are looking at how we play into the integral ecology of our planet.

The ecological crisis, like many other problems we face in 2022, can feel overwhelming. But together our actions can contribute to a better world. Thankfully we are guided by a Spirit who makes all things new and helps us move forward.

Donald McEachin, C.S.Sp.

150 Years: Why Are We Here and Where Do We Go Next?



Provincial Fr. Don McEachin, C.S.Sp. and President of Duquesne University, Ken Gormley with a commemorative brick at the 150th Anniversary Gala, April 6, 2022.

Adapted from Remarks at the 150th Anniversary Gala at Duquesne by Provincial Fr. Don McEachin, C.S.Sp.

As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Spiritan Province of the United States, there are two simple questions for us to ponder. One, why did we come here? And two, where do we go from here?

Pittsburgh in 1872 was popularly known as "hell with the lid off". Workers died at a young age. The average male life expectancy was 42 years. Many recently arrived Catholic families were at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder and looked to the Church for comfort and guidance. Bishops were looking for priests to meet the

needs of this growing church and the seminaries here could not keep up with the needs. And the German Spiritans who came were being persecuted and exiled by Bismark and his Kulturkampf. So this was why they came here, at least on a human level.

On a spiritual level, they came because they were sent. Sent by the Lord, guided by the Holy Spirit, to seek out the places where the needs were the greatest, where the Church had difficulty in finding workers. They found themselves, led by the Spirit, in Pittsburgh, in pastoral ministry to immigrant communities, offering quality education to the disadvantaged and excluded, and promoting an inclusive vision of society beyond the boundaries of race, color, or religion. The Spiritans quickly extended their pastoral care of immigrants following immigrant families to Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

Spiritans in the U.S. also discerned a pressing need to minister to African American communities in a highly segregated and prejudiced society. In collaboration with Mother (now Saint) Katharine Drexel and her Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, numerous African American parishes, missions, schools,

and a military academy for African Americans in over a dozen states, in the Northeast and in the South were founded. Eventually, the growing Province founded its own seminaries for training educators and missionaries, who were then sent to the church in Africa, Central America, the Caribbean, South America, and Asia. In recent decades, the U.S. Spiritans developed a model for integrating the laity as full partners and collaborators in our mission, ministry, and community life.

So where do we go from here? That is the part of the story yet to be written. As Spiritans, we are called to be good listeners. We are listening to the people we serve, listening to the Church, to our Bishops, and to Pope Francis. We are listening to the Holy Spirit and the signs of the times. To the reality of the contemporary waves of immigrants and refugees. To the reality of living in an ever more multicultural society and multicultural congregation. Listening to the question "How do we respond to a society increasingly polarized, culturally divided, and secularized."

We look forward to writing the next chapter together with our lay collaborators and friends. We're confident that

Continued on page 7



Villagers Learning of Plans for New School

Schools as Beacons of Hope



Current One Room School

Students in Samie Village, Sierra Leone have to ford a dangerous river during the rainy season to get to the existing one-room school – that is if their parents can afford to send them at all.

Since more than 70 percent of Sierra Leoneans live in extreme poverty, managing to survive on less than two dollars a day, education cannot be a top priority. We're currently constructing a six-class-room primary school in Samie Village that will be easier to access and include sanitation provisions.

Hope for a better life for any child begins with learning. This is why the Spiritans have a long history of involvement in small parish-based nursery, primary and secondary schools.



Fr. Michael Fillie, C.S.Sp., has been successful in raising some funds from donors in Ireland towards the \$20,000 project funding goal, but we have further to go before we can provide a safer education experience for the children of Samie Village. Your generous gift can help. Visit spiritans.org/donation-form, and select "education" from the drop-down menu.

Spiritans have ministered in Sierra Leone for over 150 years. The first group of two French priests and an Irish brother arrived in 1864. They settled in Freetown, the capital of a British colony, home to an ethnically mixed community of former slaves, many liberated from ships that had been attempting to transport them across the Atlantic.

Meeting People Where They Are

Spiritans priests routinely visit refugee settlement camps, outstations, prisons, and mission parishes, requiring them to have a Mass Kit available for travel. As friends of the Spiritans, we are turning to you, with this very holy and practical request to help a missionary.

Prayerfully consider contributing toward the \$500 cost needed to purchase and distribute each Mass Kit. Your name will be prominently placed with the Mass Kit, made in Italy, so that the missionary can remember you and your intentions as he says Mass.


News from SOMA



Spiritans Office for Mission Advancement

Mr. John Gillespie, Director
Fr. Mike Grey, C.S.Sp., Development Officer
Ms. Susan Martin, Bookkeeper
Mr. Ray Sylvester, Mission Projects

1700 West Alabama St.
Houston, TX 77098
(713) 522-2882

 Follow us on Facebook

Visit Spiritans.org/Donate



Please contact us at 713-522-2882 or go to our website [spiritans.org/donate] page and select "Mass Kit" from the drop-down menu.

Art Flourishes in Arba Minch

Last winter we shared news from the Arba-Minch Prison Art Program. SOMA donors have supported the needs of inmates both with sleeping cots and materials for the burgeoning art program at the institution.

Tesfamichael Yohannes, art teacher at the program, had several paintings featured as a part of an exhibition organized by the Irish Embassy in Ethiopia. The exhibition took place on Saint Patrick's Day in the Sheraton Hotel, Addis Ababa.



Fr. Paddy Moran, C.S.Sp. continues to feature beautiful art produced through this ministry on his Facebook page facebook.com/paddy.moran.980/



Nine artists participating in the art project at the Arba Minch, Ethiopia prison display their impressions of the ubiquitous Eland that populates eastern sub-Saharan Africa.

Sankera Campus Continues to Grow



Courtyard of newly constructed priests' residence

SOMA donors have supported past projects at Sankera, Nigeria providing the electrical connectivity for the school and on-campus student housing, seating for the chapel, and furnishings for one of the bedrooms in the new residence.

The school, Holy Ghost College, opened in 2006, is devoted to develop-

ing young girls and boys in academics and morals based on the Catholic faith. Students range from nursery school age to students in their early teens.

A new structure is under construction on the property will house 6 Spiritans when fully occupied. You can provide the furniture, fixtures, and equipment for one of the bedrooms for \$1,350.



Nainokanoka Parish Maasai Land Tanzania



Fr. Charles M'mali, C.S.Sp. Among the Maasai

Evangelization to the Maasai

For over 150 years Spiritans have introduced the "Good News" to Tanzania, and for many decades to members of the nomadic Maasai.

Fr. Ned Marchessault, C.S.Sp., and Fr. Joe Herzstein, C.S.Sp., each worked for more than 50 years among the Maasai. Today, Fr. Pat Patten, C.S.Sp. continues to provide the Flying Medical Services

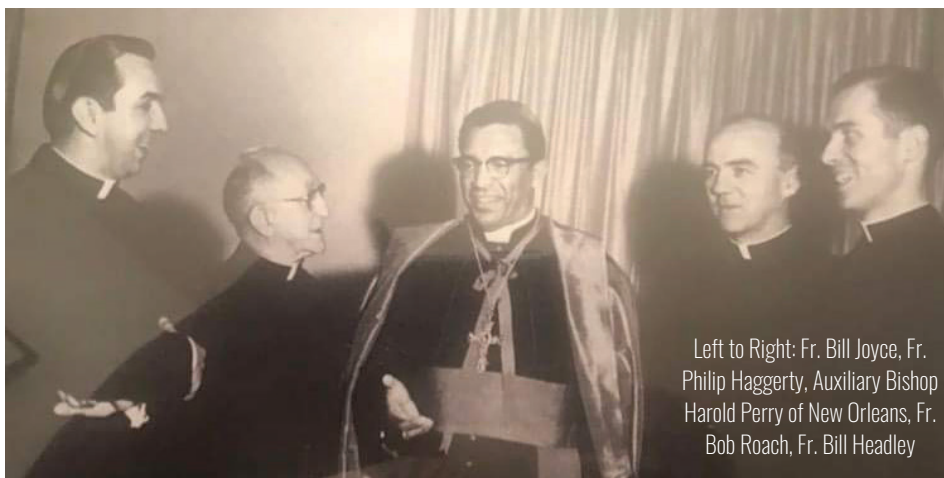
to the region, which he has operated for over 30 years.

When Fr. Charles M'mali, C.S.Sp., the newly appointed pastor at Nanokanoka Parish in the Maasai land of Tanzania, arrived at the parish, he reached out to SOMA to request funds to purchase badly needed liturgical vestments and vessels for celebrating

Ways to Contribute

- **DONATE ONLINE** at **Spiritans.org**.
- **MAIL A CHECK** (or money order) made payable to *Congregation of the Holy Spirit*, 1700 West Alabama Street, Houston, TX 77098
- **SHOP AT AMAZON!** Visit **Amazonsmile.com** and select "Sharelink-Spiritans Worldwide Aid Foundation Inc."
- **PURCHASE COFFEE** through **SaintBasilCoffee.com**, select "Spiritans" as the Group Code.
- **DONATE AN UNWANTED VEHICLE** through CarEasy.org. Visit **CarEasy.org/nonprofit/congregation-of-the-holy-spirit**.
- **PLANNED GIVING**. Visit **Spiritans.org/planned-giving** for details.

Questions? Please call 713-522-2882. Thank you!



Left to Right: Fr. Bill Joyce, Philip Haggerty, Auxiliary Bishop Harold Perry of New Orleans, Fr. Bob Roach, Fr. Bill Headley

In 1892, a second request was made for the Spiritans to take over the mission among African-Americans in the Charleston/Beaufort area. Again, because of the lack of personnel, the Spiritans were unable to take up the mission in Charleston. The Josephites did take up the mission in Charleston. Finally, because of a lack of personnel in the Josephite community, they had to withdraw. The Oblate Sisters of Providence from Baltimore continued their ministry in staffing the schools of the mission.

Celebrating the 150 Years of History: Spiritans in Charleston

The history of the Spiritans ministry among Black Catholics in South Carolina is a story not explored for the vast richness of working with descendants of freed slaves in the Charleston area. From the very beginning, it seemed that the Spiritan charism was the right match for this mission.

Francis Libermann from the very early days of the Spiritan Congregation expressed concern for enslaved and recently freed Africans in America. In 1870, Bishop Patrick Lynch, the Bishop of Charleston, South Carolina asked for the help of Spiritans in establishing a mission to meet the African-Americans

in his diocese. The diocese comprised the entire state of South Carolina. Be-



Children of Immaculate Conception School with Oblate Sisters of Providence.

cause of the Franco-Prussian War, the Spiritans were unable to accept this mission at that time.

In 1917, Fr. James Hyland, C.S.Sp. was appointed as pastor of St. Peter Claver mission in Charleston, South Carolina. This was the Spiritan's beginning of ministry in Charleston. St. Peter Claver mission was a former Jewish Synagogue on Wentworth Street located in an area a distance from where the majority of African-Americans lived.

The church and school continued to flourish. With the help of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, catechism classes and evangelization efforts grew. Fr. Hyland still pushed for a church to be built closer to where the vast majority of African-Americans lived. After a few years, Fr. Hyland was appointed to Louisiana.

In 1920, Fr. William Long became pastor and he established a church in the heart of the African-American community. Immaculate Conception Church

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St Peter Claver Church



Immaculate Conception Church



Our Lady of Mercy Church

The Light of Candles and of Stars

Some Musings on Holy Week from Brazil

By Matthew Broeren, C.S.Sp. who is living in Brazil for his Pastoral Ministry Experience.

After completing my three months of language school, I moved out officially into the peripheries of São Paulo in December, specifically to Most Holy Trinity Parish in Perus. During this time, and as my Portuguese has continued to improve, I have been able to be more involved in Pastoral work, such as the Pastoral Health Care of Children, Ministerial Formations for parishioners, Youth Group/Spiritan Missionary Youth (Juventude Espiritana Missionaria, JEM), Eucharistic celebrations, etc. It all has been interesting, but its crescendo, for me, arrived during Holy Week.

To say that the peripheries have gone through a lot over these past few years is an understatement. Between the Pandemic, the Bolsonaro's Government, unemployment, and, more recently, floods, the difficulties seem to mount on top of each other. Yet, in the midst of all of this, we began our Holy Week celebrations, the first real Holy Week celebrations since the pandemic first arrived in Brazil, celebrations which had much time, heart, and spirituality poured into them.

Our Holy Week was a packed one: Palm Sunday, Office of Our Lady, Office of Our Lady of Sorrows, Tenebrae, Holy Thursday, a public, live Way of the Cross, Adoration of the Cross, Meetings of Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lord Deceased, and, of course, the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday masses. And these liturgies were profound and spiritually deep, but simple ritual and aesthetic do not bring about nourishment in themselves, no matter the context. One can perform a kenosis without theosis, which is just a dressed up form of secularization, an abandonment of Jesus in the tomb... And, on the other hand, a theosis without a kenosis to the context is nothing short of an oppressive attempt at self-divinization.

... On Easter Sunday, after some three hours of sleep, I awoke to meet a beautiful sunrise that itself preached the resurrection. This was to be the finishing moment of what was a grand event. After one mass and a brief dialogue with the community, I was walking with Fr. Niall Colgan, C.S.Sp., to another community. The quiet emptiness of the Tomb in this Easter Sunday's readings matched the quiet and cool morning. It was strange, that such a rocking and revolution of cosmos had occurred and, yet, life seemed to go on. The dogs continued to scavenge, a rooster sat quietly after his morning call, a handful of people met in an evangelical church, and others passed, only sometimes noting our presence. It seems to be that, with the finding of the empty tomb, we are sent from theodrama to ambiguity. What this Holy Week has given is a renewed, spiritual depth, a cosmic union that drives forward to the eschaton. But, nourished by such an encounter, we go back to the world and its crises, we go back to find grace and preach this resurrection, that necropolitics has lost authoritative legitimacy.

Because something more than the secular is going on, that drives us to passion, brings us into a deep union with the Godhead and the cosmos, and then brings us forth recreated anew, we go forth. It shall perhaps the same drama that will be repeated time and time again, but, driven by souls lit aflame, following Him on the Way, proclaiming the Lumen Christi, we keep going, we dare to take one more step. While a liturgy will never resolve social issues in themselves, it is difficult to find the strength to continue in true faith in this world without it. Indeed, what we have found is a reason to go on living with our candles lit beneath the stars, to which our next cry shall rise up, and shall begin the drama of salvation once more.

Read Matthew's further reflections at spiritans.org/vocations



Matthew Broeren, C.S.Sp. with Fr. José Miguel Portillo, C.S.Sp., Br. Victor Viana, C.S.Sp., Fr. Mark Brendan Foley, C.S.Sp.



The cross has become our flourishing. It is the Tree from which blooms with New Life



One of the many ways back from the Empty tomb to proclaim His Resurrection.

Celebrating 150th of U.S. Province History: Spiritans in Charleston

Continued from page 5

and School were established on Coming Street with the Oblate Sisters of Providence staffing the School. Immaculate Conception Church and St. Peter Claver Church along with Our Lady of Mercy mission (1954) continued to flourish within the Black community of Charleston until 1967.

St. Peter Claver parish was merged with St. Patrick parish in 1967. The first Spiritan pastor of St. Patrick was Fr. Philip Haggerty, C.S.Sp. He was assisted by Fathers William Headley, C.S.Sp., and William Joyce, C.S.Sp. With this merger, the congregation of St. Patrick became predominately African-American. The parish began to

prosper. Soon several Spiritans such as Fathers Moroney, Tuozzolo, Figaro, Spangenberg, and Howard would take on the leadership of this parish.

Fr. Egbert Figaro, C.S.Sp. was the first black priest to serve in the Charleston area. Under his leadership, a vast evangelization and renovation process took place in the community. During his leadership, there was more interaction with the non-Catholic churches in the area, and the Charleston black Catholic community was truly seen as a viable part of the community and Diocese of Charleston. Fr. Philip Howard C.S.Sp. from Trinidad was the last Spiritan to serve at St. Patrick before the order withdrew in 1995.



Oblate Sisters of Providence on the front stairs of St. Patrick Church with Fr. Figaro, Bishop Unterkofler of Charleston and Fr. Philip Haggerty, provincial.

Spotlight on a Lay Spiritan

As we continue to welcome the new Lay members who made their first formal commitments in November 2021, we're pleased to introduce Paula Nettleship.

Paula found the U.S. Spiritans through her husband Ian who has been a lay member for nearly 10 years. She made her formal commitment as a Lay Spiritan on November 15, 2021, with the approval of then-Provincial Fr. Jeff Duaime, C.S.Sp.

"It has been a good fit for me as I have long worked in Social Justice," Paula said.



Paula has always been drawn to helping the forgotten and underserved, including serving on the Justice and Peace committee at her parish, running her parish's EM program in local nursing homes, organizing Catholics for Change in Our Church and serving as a board member for the Association of Pittsburgh Priests. Being raised in a very intercultural family, Paula is also particularly dedicated to justice and anti-racism work.

Paula works as a jewelry artist making intricately handwoven, artisan jewelry for her business designs2C to sell at

local galleries and art shows all across the country. She donates 15% of her business sales to support the work of the Spiritan-led Ceramic Water Filter Solutions, of which she also sits on the board with her husband.

Paula and her husband live in Mt. Lebanon and have two adult children. As non-Pittsburgh natives, they frequently travel to the West Coast and the UK to visit family.

Her favorite Bible verse is 1 Corinthians 13: 8 and 13, "Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. . . Thus there are three things that endure: faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love."

150 Years: Why Are We Here and Where Do We Go Next?

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God who has brought us this far will continue to lead and guide us, to build Spiritan communities of radical welcome, open and inclusive, where we celebrate our multicultural heritages and together build something new and wonderful. In the words of Isaiah, the Prophet, "The Lord has done great

things for us, but Remember not just the events of the past, the things of long ago, behold, I am doing something new! Do you not perceive it?"

And so let us together honor the past, celebrate the present, and with the Spirit to guide us, make something new for the future.



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“Caring for our brothers and sisters means caring for the home we share. This responsibility is ‘essential for a life of virtue.’” *Laudato Si'*, 217

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Summer 2022

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From the Spiritan Archives



Old St. Mary's Catholic Church in Detroit, Michigan has been a Spiritan parish since 1893. The U.S. Spiritan Province Retreat attendees visited for an evening prayer service during the retreat.

Inside this Issue: U.S. Spiritans continue an 18-month celebration of our 150th anniversary, with a brief history of the Spiritans ministry in Charleston.

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