



## Holy Family Seminary's Alumni Newsletter 2023

Annual Newsletter #13: August 2023 ● Ed Koeninger, Jr.: Alumni Director ● Maurice Prater: Editor  
Missionaries of the Holy Family (MSF) ● 3014 Oregon Avenue, Saint Louis, MO 63118  
(888) 484-9945 ● [www.holyfamilyseminaryalumni.website](http://www.holyfamilyseminaryalumni.website)

### 2500 ASHBY ROAD: DEMOLITION!

by Ed Koeninger, Jr. — Class of 1962

Dear M.S.F. Alumni:

It is with much sadness and disbelief, that I must tell you that back in February and March of 2023, the Overland City Council made the decision to demolish the Main Building on 2500 Ashby Road – our former home and school! The building is full of mold and asbestos, and the cost to restore the building back to its original grandeur is way more than the city could handle. So, the decision was made to demolish it. As of this writing, there has not been a date set for this demolition. **See article on next page.**



### HISTORY OF RECTORS AT HOLY FAMILY SEMINARY

by Weldon Tieken — Class of 1957

We would like to hear  
about your time at  
Holy Family  
Seminary!

If you would like to  
write an article for the  
alumni newsletter,  
please contact Ed  
Koeninger at  
[ejrkoen@att.net](mailto:ejrkoen@att.net).

Rev. George A. Schroer, M.S.F.	1944 – 1946
Rev. Ernest Braun, M.S.F.	1946 – 1953
Rev. Peter Roebrocks, M.S.F.	1953 – 1956
Rev. Joseph Mathey, M.S.F.	1956 – 1963
Rev. John McDermott, M.S.F.	1963 – 1966
Rev. Thomas Copeland, M.S.F.	1966 – 1970
Rev. Herman Defler, M.S.F.	1970 – 1972
Rev. Arthur Ockwood, M.S.F.	1972 – 1975
Rev. Philip Sosa, M.S.F.	1975 – 1978
Rev. Robert O'Hara, M.S.F.	1978 – 1981
Rev. Gerald Mackin, M.S.F.	1981 – 1984
Rev. James Wasser, M.S.F.	1984 – 1987
Rev. David Tonary, M.S.F.	1987 – June 1990

Rev. Esteban (Steven) Hernandez, M.S.F. (Overseer of Property)	June 1990 – November 1990
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Br. Kenneth Schwartz (Overseer of Property until it was sold)	November 1990 – 1994
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# WILDWOOD HISTORY: HOME OF CHARLES D. GARNETT

by © Sandy Jackson — Historian & Archaeologist

When prominent Saint Louis businessman Charles D. Garnett amassed a fortune in the paper manufacturing business, he invested his income in building what is believed to be the first country estate in the community of Overland Park, Missouri. Garnett's first mansion built at Ashby Road and the railcar line to Creve Coeur Lake, along present Midland Boulevard, burned to the ground in 1907. At the same location the following year, Garnett erected a larger mansion which he named Wildwood. Most of this elaborate dwelling still exists within the boundaries of Wild Acres Park. [This area eventually became the Holy Family Seminary.]

Wildwood sat back south from the railcar tracks about 700 feet, on a beautiful knoll overlooking the local country for miles in every direction. On his property of about 30 acres grew magnificent old forest trees. The grounds also included ornamental shade trees, shrubbery, an extensive orchard, and fine garden. Within the view of Garnett's home, and most prominent on the grounds, was the pristine lake he had constructed.

Charles Garnett's new three-story mansion, from designs by Francis Drischler, was a combination of Spanish renaissance and colonial architecture. The structure, which was placed on the old foundation, consisted of buff Roman brick with white stone trimmings and a red Spanish tile roof. The color and shape of the building formed a very pleasing combination in contrast with the forested background. After the fire that destroyed Garnett's first home, it was said that he became a believer in concrete, as much of his buildings were then built upon that material. The foundations of the house, the porches, as well as the floors of the house, were of reinforced concrete which, with brick walls and tile roof, made the building practically fireproof.

On the north side of the home was the main entrance, covered with a massive white pediment supported by six, two-story high Ionic columns. A spacious stone porch with red tile roof supported by smaller columns surrounded the house on three sides. Across the southern end of the house was a glass sunroom.

Within the main entrance, the interior of the home opened into a large reception hall that extended down the center, the full depth of the building. It terminated in a broad flight of steps with globe lights atop columns at the base of the steps. The stairway rose to a landing halfway between the first and second floors. From there the landing steps branched to the right and the left up to the second floor hall. Three sides of the stair landing were composed of detailed wooden seats. Extending across the entire width of the landing was a beautiful painted window showing a Scotch Forest and Lake Scene, with stag at bay, entitled *Scenting Danger*.

Prominent within the reception hall was a magnificent grand piano. Both the reception area and second floor hall were finished in detailed mahogany. Unique to the house were large halls duplicated on all three floors that ran through the center of the house. An oval opening, surrounded by a rail, formed a gallery on each floor, over which was located in the roof an art-glass skylight that provided ventilation and light to all of the halls.

Located to the right of the main hall were the library and dining room, both of which were finished in very dark Flemish oak. The wide doorways between the rooms were flanked by two Ionic columns per side. To the left of the main hall were the billiard and living rooms, finished in Circassian walnut, all cut from a massive single tree, and a billiard table constructed of the same wood. Carved lion heads framed either side of the main fireplace. The first floor walls were paneled in hardwood from five to eight feet in height with beamed ceilings. Finished hardwood floors throughout the house matched the other woodwork.

The second floor chambers were finished in ivory white enamel with mahogany doors. The third floor was constructed of finished curly yellow pine. The closets, of which there were twelve, were exceptionally large and all lighted by electricity. There were five bathrooms, all of white Italian marble and porcelain, doors of plate mirrors, and windows of art glass. The largest bathroom measured 14 feet by 18 feet. Three were on the second floor and two on the third. Each bed chamber connected directly with a bath. The third floor contained the servants quarters, cedar, and storerooms and two guest chambers. The furnished kitchen was built with the entire walls and ceilings of white opal glass in frame panels of Flemish oak. Hot water was used for heating and both electricity and gas for lighting. Acetylene gas made on the property was also used for cooking. In the basement were the laundry, boiler, gas plant, store, and fuel rooms.

To the south of the mansion, Garnett had constructed a two-story brick carriage house, an icehouse which he stocked with ice from his own lake, a chicken house, a cottage for his gardener, and a pump and well house with artesian well. Throughout the property, a complete water system was maintained by the use of machinery forcing compressed air. Also built on the grounds were a large hardwood stable finished with two sleeping rooms, running water, and a toilet upstairs. On ground level were stalls for four oxen and three cows and a complete carpenter and blacksmith shop.

A wooden bridge built over a ravine once connected the Garnett mansion with the lake and forested area. The bridge was later replaced with one constructed of concrete. The balustrades and urns used for the upper works were in the Beaux Arts style and may have been salvaged from the Saint Louis World's Fair in 1904.

Extensive modifications and additions were made by subsequent owners in the following century. This article originally appeared in the *Localite Newspaper* of Overland, Missouri. Mr. Sandy Jackson can be contacted at [claudevjackson@aol.com](mailto:claudevjackson@aol.com). Reprinted with permission. © All rights reserved.



### *Eternal Rest Grant unto Them, O Lord*

- +Father Simon Brzozowski, M.S.F. – February 7, 2023
- +Julian C. McLendon – May 26, 2023
- +All M.S.F. Priests, Brothers, Alumni, and Benefactors

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

## **AROUND THE PROVINCE**

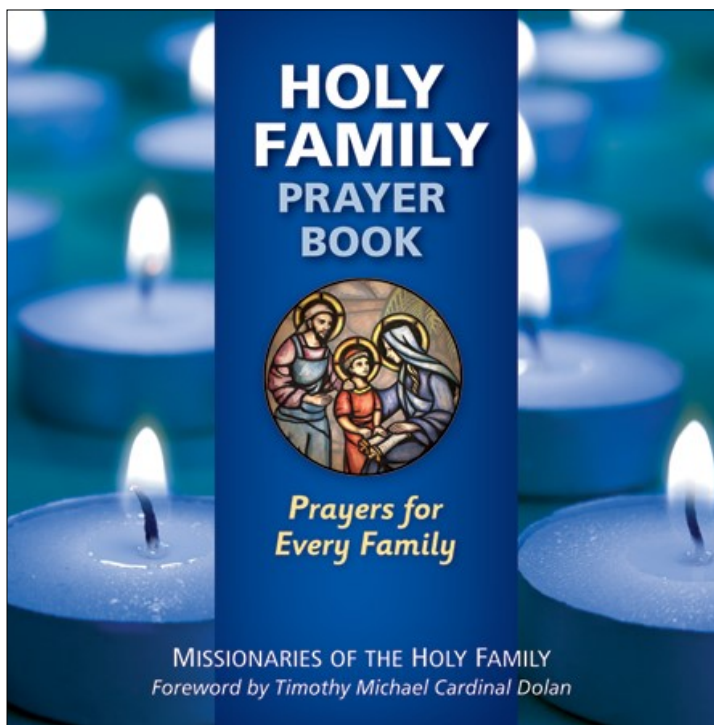
by Very Rev. Philip Sosa, M.S.F. — Class of 1959

Currently, the North American Province consists of:

- 8 – North American Priests
- 1 – Religious Brother
- 6 – International Priests

Today, the international priests are the “backbone” of the province. The international priests agree to and sign an 8-year contract to come to Saint Louis, Missouri. They learn English and the different cultural environment within America. When they are ready to serve, they will be assigned to parishes in Texas where they will then learn Spanish.

At this time, there is no vocation director and no formation director. Any qualified candidates to religious life are being referred to the La Salette Fathers.



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Ask for it at your local Catholic bookstore.

**God bless your Family!**

“HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH, make our family one with you. Help us to be instruments of peace. Grant that love, strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass...”

— From the *Holy Family Prayer*

## THE MESSENGER MAGAZINE

The Summer 2023 issue of *The Messenger* from the Missionaries of the Holy Family is now available online at [www.msf-america.org](http://www.msf-america.org).

Are you receiving the printed version of *The Messenger* at your home? If not, be sure to let us know! Free, extra copies for your family and friends are also available from the provincial office in Saint Louis. Call toll free at 1-888-484-9945 or e-mail [mprater@msf-america.org](mailto:mprater@msf-america.org).

Please be sure to check out the many family life articles, including:

- Made in Madagascar
- Wisdom from the Bald Guy
- An Apple for Sister
- Be Reconciled to God

**Happy Reading! +JMJ+**



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