The St. Clement Redemptorist Mission Community has always had a ministry of prayer, but confreres have intensified their prayers since the coronavirus lockdown went into effect in March. Every day they receive prayer requests – from family members, friends, and the faithful around the world who submit requests online at the Denver Province website or the Our Mother of Perpetual Help site on Facebook. So many people are asking Our Mother to get them through this trying time that the community has included special prayers related to the pandemic in their daily Masses and Evening Prayers.

The novena in preparation for the Feast of Our Mother of Perpetual Help was particularly special at St. Clement’s this year. With the community on lockdown, confreres are not able to leave for annual retreats. But they are blessed their own in-house speaker, Br. Dan Korn, who specializes in

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the spirituality of the Icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Liguori Publications released his new pamphlet, Under the Gaze of Mary, 30 Days of Prayer, in preparation for the feast day.

Br. Dan led a novena/retreat this year, encouraging community members to spend quality time gazing deeply into the Icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. His new pamphlet is geared to daily reflections about plentiful redemption as expressed in the Icon, which can be added to breviary prayers. Br. Dan’s nine daily presentations helped deepen their personal devotion, and he encouraged them all to pray especially to Our Mother of Perpetual Help – for themselves and for all of those who ask for their prayers.

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In the midst of the Perpetual Help novena – on June 25 – the community was privileged to celebrate the ordination jubilee of three confreres: Fr. Bob Halter, Fr. Greg Mayers and Fr. Bill Wright. Fr. Vic Karls was able to celebrate his jubilee with his family at his home parish, St. Bernard Church, in Middleton, WI. Classmate and former Redemptorist Fr. Jim Garcia, who was incardinated into the Archdiocese of San Francisco and is now retired in Arizona, participated in Fr. Vic’s celebration, and traveled to Liguori to celebrate with Fr. Bob, Fr. Greg and Fr. Bill. As the community is religiously observing CDC recommendations and the guidance of the Provincial Superior, visitors were not allowed to participate in the Mass of Thanksgiving. Instead, they visited outside on the patio, maintaining proper social distancing guidelines.

Although confreres missed the large province-wide gatherings of previous years, they said their small number only made their prayers of thanksgiving for the decades of dedicated service of these confreres even more fervent.

Left to right, from above:
Ordination jubilarians Fr. Bill Wright, Fr. Bob Halter and Fr. Greg Mayers; Fr. Gan Nguyen presents Br. Dan Korn with a gift for leading the community retreat/novena; Fr. Bob celebrates the Mass of Thanksgiving; Fr. Bill, Fr. Bob and Fr. Greg are presented with a beautiful cake; and Fr. Ken Sedlak and Fr. Bob enjoy some time on the patio.

Submitted by Kristine Stremel; photos by Fr. Vincent Minh
Celebrating 50 Years

On Friday, June 26, Fr. Joe Butz celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving in honor of Our Mother of Perpetual Help for his 50 years of priesthood.

While because of restrictions only the local Redemptorist community of Oconomowoc and his classmate and fellow jubilarian, Fr. Vic Karls, and Fr. Vic’s brother, Richard, were physically present; we know that Fr. Joe’s family as well as the many people he ministered to along the Amazon River and many here in the United States were with him and all of us in spirit on this great occasion.

Wishing he and the other jubilarians many more years!

Left to right, from above:
Fr. Joe Butz with the Icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help;
Fr. Vic Karls at the ambo; Fr. Joe during the elevation; and
Fr. Joe distributing communion to Fr. Ted Lawson.

Submitted by Fr. Richard Thibodeau
Promoting Racial Justice

Approximately 300 people gathered at St. Alphonsus “Rock” Church in St. Louis on June 27 for a Prayer Vigil, Standing for Racial Justice gathering sponsored by the Peace & Justice Committee of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

“It was a great witness, and many people driving by honked their horns in support,” said Fr. Steve Benden, pastor. “Several excellent speakers focused on Black Lives Matter and White Privilege, leading up to the most dramatic part of the event – 8 minutes and 46 seconds of silence – the time it took to murder George Floyd. It is amazing how long that time period is when you’re thinking about George Floyd dying.”

Fr. Steve believes that systemic racism must be eradicated, and that these kinds of events must continue because we need constant reminders to be kind and loving. “I can call for an end to racism, but I choose to call for love of neighbor in every situation, regardless of skin color. I call for love even within our own families, parishes, states and country. Each person must make that change in their own heart first; otherwise, nothing will change.”

Submitted by Kristine Stremel

From top:
Some of the 300 people calling for racial justice at St. Alphonsus “Rock” Church in St. Louis last Saturday, June 27; and Fr. David Polek participating in the social justice event.

Photos submitted by Fr. Steve Benden
Left to right, from top:
Families wearing masks and carrying signs to support racial justice; Fr. Steve Benden joins supporters on the sidewalk; religious nuns out in force for the event; and Fr. Rodney Olive (Baltimore Province), associate pastor, stands in solidarity with those calling for justice in St. Louis.
Left to right, from top left:
Event speakers at the podium and seated behind permanent signage installed on the fence; event signage; Fr. Pete Schavitz chats with others participating in the gathering; and a photo taken from across the street of the peaceful gathering hosted by the Peace & Justice Committee of the Archdiocese of St. Louis at St. Alphonsus “Rock” Church.
Sister Thea Bowman: National Witness to Possibility of Racial Harmony

d by Father Maurice Nutt

Recently a fellow priest friend told me that a parishioner called him because she was troubled by the way that George Floyd was being hailed as a saint by the media. “He wasn’t a saint,” she quipped. The priest replied, “No, he wasn’t a saint, but neither are you and I, we are all sinners in need of God’s grace and forgiveness.”

We’ve watched the excruciating video of an apprehended 46-year-old African American man by four Minneapolis police officers, hand-cuffed face down on the ground as one of the police officers relentlessly pressed his knee into his neck for eight minutes and forty-six seconds. Floyd in anguish cried out, “Please, I can’t breathe” to no avail and became unconscious and died of asphyxiation.

Moments after George Floyd’s murder and continuing on today, protests have erupted globally in cities large and small. Protesters have been multiracial and intergenerational, indicating that they are united in their quest for justice and racial harmony. The demands for racial justice and equality, an end to racial violence, and police reform have reverberated incessantly.

No, George Floyd was not a saint, but he remains a symbol of something much more insidious: the sin of racism. This sin is an ever-present reminder that some people and institutions with economic, social, cultural, political power and privilege deliberately or unwittingly subjugate and oppress those who do not enjoy equal power and privilege. Some social and economic advances notwithstanding, racism and discrimination continues to plague the vast majority of people of color in our nation.

Systemic racism has been present in our country since 1619, the year that enslaved Africans were brought to the shores of what would eventually become the United States. Thus, for four hundred years African Americans have fought for justice and equality: a fight that has never been fair nor equal. Four hundred years marked by the era of slavery, Reconstruction, “Jim Crow” segregation, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Black Lives Matter Movement. The struggle has been for the respect of their humanity and recognition as being created in the image and likeness of God – like all humanity. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “Protest is the language of the unheard.” Protest is also the language of those who are tired of fighting and want the dominant culture to hear and to understand.

The voices crying out for the eradication of racism are not only being heard from the voices of the protesters on our city streets, but also from religious women and men, priests, laity, theologians, Bishops, and even from Pope Francis. Cardinal Blase Cupich of Chicago said, “People of color suffer discrimination and indignities not only from racist individuals, but from the very structures erected by our society that were meant to protect the vulnerable.” Pope Francis instructs us, “We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life.” And still there is yet another voice of one who walked and worked among us and continues to call us to intercultural appreciation and racial reconciliation, Servant of God Sr. Thea Bowman, FSPA. Here is her testimony: “I can be a bridge over troubled water. I can take you by the hand and take you with me into the black community. I can walk with you into your community, and if I walk with you into your community, I don’t enter as a stranger, I walk as your sister.”

We have a Mississippian who was a national witness to the possibility of racial healing and reconciliation. Sr. Thea believed that we all must work to tear down the walls of racial division in our segregated and polarized society and church by making the effort to truly be in contact with one another: to get to know another’s story,

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their joys, sorrows, hopes and dreams. She was emphatic that the church as the Body of Christ must first confess her sin of racism, make amends and come to a place of healing and reconciliation. Then and only then can the church be a leader in racial healing globally. Sister Thea said: “May the Spirit within us and among us inspire us to keep on keeping on, in our homes and families, in our communities and in our church. May the Spirit inspire us, and may we share our spiritual and cultural gifts with the church and with the world. We’ve come this far by faith. Can’t turn around.”

Sister Thea, pray for us!

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The Redemptorists of the Denver Province

Joyfully Announce that

Steven James Urban, C.Ss.R.
Jose Antonio Montoya Guerrero, C.Ss.R.

will make their First Profession of Vows to the Very Rev. Stephen Rehrauer, C.Ss.R.

Sunday, July 19, 2020
8:30 AM Mass
St. Gerard Church
240 West Robb Avenue
Lima, OH

Redemptorist novices (left to right) Vinh Nguyen, Antonio Montoya, Bao Tran, Steven Urban and Dai Ho are preparing to make temporary vows as members of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. Please hold them all in prayer.

Submitted by Fr. Chuong Cao

Catholic News Service reporter Michael Sainsbury offers an overview of Fr. Joe Maier’s 49 years of ministry in Bangkok’s market-side slum district of Klong Toey in “U.S. priest finds his niche working in Bangkok with poorest of the poor” published on June 28. “We are at our best when we work with the poorest of the poor; when we lose sight of that, we fail,” he said.


Submitted by Kristine Stremel

UPDATE 07.03.20
No Fear of Coronavirus. Who can say that nowadays? Maybe only Br. Gerry Patin’s bees. Since they followed him from Oconomowoc to Liguori, they have worked tirelessly to produce abundant first-class organic honey and scented soaps for confreres. It has been revealed that one of China’s treatments for Covid-19 is a controversial traditional Chinese medicine inspired by a medical textbook written 1,800 years ago. One of the key ingredients is honey.

Let’s pray that as long as “Brother Bee Keeper” honey is on the dinner table, the community is safe from Covid-19. Thank you, Br. Gerry, as well as Br. Dan Korn, Br. Andy Patin and Br. Terry Burke for dedicating their time to tend flower and vegetable gardens around the property.

Left to right, from top left: Deacon Rick Fischer checks Sarah Hardin’s temperature before letting her in the kitchen to work; Br. Dan Korn and Br. Gerry Patin enjoy lunch on the patio; Br. Terry Burke at work in his vegetable garden; and Br. Dan with his geraniums.

Article and photos submitted by Fr. Vincent Minh
Ministry Continues

The Redemptorist community at St. Mary’s of the Assumption in Whittier is enforcing social distance recommendations – celebrating Mass outdoors and mandating the use of face masks – as they continue to minister to the parish community. Patrons of the food bank continue to donate food, which enabled the parish to feed about 325 families during a recent week.

*Left to right, from above:*

An outdoor Mass; Fr. Patrick Keyes wears a mask distributing communion; a volunteer with Fr. Ted Dorcey; and volunteers load groceries into a car.

Submitted by Br. Larry Luján
Celebrating the Redeemer

Redemptorists and their Partners in Mission are celebrating the Feast of Jesus the Redeemer on July 19. Redemptorists have celebrated this significant feast on the third Sunday of July since 1749. This year, the 10:00 am (CDT) Mass at St. Michael Parish in Chicago will be livestreamed on the Facebook pages of St. Michael, the Denver Province and Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Fr. Greg May will lead a Prayer Service at 3:00 pm that will be shared via Zoom.

Confreres interested in staring a Circle of Redemptorist Associates at their ministry sites may contact members of the Working Group for more information at: PIM@redemptorists-denver.org.

Submitted by Fr. Greg May

PRAYER REQUESTS

The repose of the soul of Fr. Brian Johnson’s sister, Ginny, who died on June 30; and for the consolation of her family and friends.

Redemptorist novices as they prepare for their first profession of vows; and Scott Partin, who begins novitiate in Chicago later this month.

An end to racism and violence, and the pursuit of justice and peace worldwide.

All of those impacted by COVID-19 worldwide; and the health and well being of the medical professionals, essential workers and others who continue to provide services.

Members of the Denver Province, as they adapt to changing circumstances, and the success of their mission to serve the People of God.

An increase in vocations to religious life – especially to the Redemptorists and the Redemptoristines – and our vocation prospects and students in formation.


Family members and friends dealing with health issues, especially: Fr. Tom Lester; Fr. Brian Johnson’s brothers, Paul and Ron Johnson; former Redemptorist Fr. Marty Laumann; Fr. Denis Ryan’s brother, Lanny Ryan; Annie Hoffman; Fr. Warren Drinkwater’s brother, Bill Drinkwater; Fr. Nghia Cao’s father and his brother, Derek; Jayne Closs of Barron, WI; Fr. Larry Sanders’ mother, Pauline Sanders; former Redemptorist Paul Cloughley; Fr. Chung Tran’s father; Msgr. Ed Randall of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston; Fr. Thanh Nguyen’s father, Thân Nguyễn; Phoebe Lindholm; Fr. Albert Castellino’s brother, Anthony Castellino; Fr. Johnmary Chijoke Chiji of the Vice Province of Nigeria; former Redemptorist Joe Viverito; former Redemptorist student Gerry Donnelly’s daughter, Colleen; Fr. Bill Peterson’s sister-in-law, Margi Peterson, and her family; Fr. Scott Katzenberger’s father, Karl Katzenberger; former Redemptorist Bob Bek; Maureen Malleis of Grand Rapids; Fr. Maurice Nutt’s former administrative assistant, Loretta Salomon; Fr. John Cody’s brother, Peter Cody; Paul Farek; Terry Newcomb; Br. Daniel Hall’s parents, George and Marlene Hall; Fr. Frank Kriski’s niece, Patricia Bride; Fr. Kyle Fisher’s brother, Delbert Fisher; Fr. José Chavez’ mother; and Fr. Tuan Nguyen’s father, An Nguyen.

Members of the League of St. Gerard, our Partners in Mission, Co-Redemptorists and all benefactors of the Denver Province, all who have asked for our prayers, and especially those most in need of our prayers.

Please contact Kristine Stremel at kstremel@redemptorists-denver.org to include or remove a Prayer Request.