

# NEWSLETTER



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## FR. GENERAL'S VISIT

Fr. Jesus Lecea, our Superior General, and Fr. Diego Bernal, his General Assistant, spent almost three weeks visiting our houses and ministries in the United States.

They arrived in Washington on October 27th, and after a meeting with the Provincial Congregation they visited our Devon, Kentucky, Fort Lauderdale and Miami communities.

A canonical visitation is an event that happens every six years, and it is an occasion for the Superior General to keep in touch with the real life of the Piarist provinces, to help us in assessing our situation and future plans, and to strengthen our communion with the whole Order.

Our visitors had the opportunity to attend at least two important events: the celebration of the 450th anniversary of the birth of



Fr. General (third from left) and Fr. Diego (far left) begin their visit in Washington with the Provincial Congregation

St. Joseph Calasanz at our School in Devon, and the ground breaking of the new formation house in Miami.

They dedicated time to visit each of our schools and to talk with the teachers, students and other people connected with us.

"I want to congratulate you", Fr. General said. "I see that, although the situation is fragile for the scarcity of members, you are living a moment of HOPE."

Thank you for bringing us your support and encouragement!

## FR. PROVINCIAL'S CORNER

### The Council of Major Superiors

Greetings to all the members of the Province.

It was a very enriching experience to participate in the Council of Majors Superiors.

**The numbers:** Twentyfive Major Superiors were present from Europe, America, Africa and Asia, as well as other guests and staff. In all, 42 people were present.

**The site:** the beautiful house

of Peralta de la Sal, the birth place of our Holy Founder.

**The atmosphere:** Friendly and relaxed. Respectful, deep and intelligent sharing.

**The purpose:** to listen to the various realities of the Order and to give advise to Fr. General.

**The content:** Two main topics from the General Chapter:

1. Incorporation of the Laity into our Spirituality and Mission. There are two vocations,

with one mission.

2. Our Ministry today.

There were also other minor topics (new foundations, official languages for the Order, the holiness of the major Superiors, the care of our patrimony. And the planning for 2008-09.

It was a great experience. Mario Vizcaino, Provincial





## MIAMI NEWS



Fr. General, with Father Mario is breaking the ground for the new formation house in Miami.

For many years, Fr. Mario has been dreaming of having a Piarist House on the grounds of SEPI. There were many struggles to raise the money for the project (and more funding is still needed!), and to obtain the building permits... At last, everything is in order.

Fr. General was invited on November 12 into the SEPI garden to "break the ground" of this building that hope-

fully will be completed in six months.

In 2008 SEPI will celebrate the 30th anniversary. The blessing of the new building in October will be the culminating moment of the celebrations.

The staff of SEPI, current and former Piarist Fathers, members of the UFEC and other friends attended the ceremony. "We are making history", Fr. Mario said. "This is an important event for SEPI and for the Piarist Fathers".

## VOCATION STORIES

During my adolescence I was wondering what could be the reason that some Spanish priests were living in my town. A town far away, not only from Guatemala City, but far from Europe. What could have moved them to leave their country to live like (and, sometimes, worse) the farmers in my town. I wondered also, and more than once, what was moving them to endure the threats of the civil authorities and the scorn of the rich landowners.

Sometimes I heard my parents, catechists and other people saying that they were moved by love for Christ. That was a beautiful idea for my childhood years. But I felt later on how difficult this was. When somebody asked me if I wanted to become a priest, I said no. My friends said that priests were not able to get a girlfriend, and that was the reason for them to become priests. Since I did get girlfriends, I was excused to become a priest..

When I was 27 years old, and living in New York, I felt inside me the strong desire to become a priest. I tried to join a seminary, but they didn't accept me because I lacked certain documents and did not have an acceptable academic background. I got angry, and thought that, definitely, I was not meant to be a priest. However, something was stirring inside me, and I planned to go back to Guatemala to look for a seminary or religious community. I wanted to know once and for all whether God was calling me to priesthood or to married life.

At the end of May 2005 somebody told me about the Piarist Fathers. They invited me to come for a vocational search-in. They talked to me about the call of God to live the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity, but above all the option for the poor. I liked what I heard: that was what I was searching for. On August 22 of that year I joined them as an aspirant. I started reading, hearing and understanding the reason that those foreign priests had left everything in their



country and come to live in my hidden town in Guatemala.

Two years later I feel that I am just discovering the love that my parents and catechists talked about during my childhood, and that I escaped from during my adolescence. I don't know if I will be able to go as far as those priests who came to my town, but I know one thing for sure, that there is a Love that invites me to know and to follow. Although I tried to escape from it, it has kept on following me, and I don't know how far it will bring me...

Novice Gliberto Mejia

*"To become a good vase,  
worthy to be presented before  
any man, it is necessary,  
first, that the metal might be  
very well hammered. The  
same happens in the service  
of God: it is necessary to  
bear with patience all things  
and to return with much  
charity and meekness, good  
for bad, in such a way that  
the neighbor might remain  
edified.*

**St. Joseph Calasanz  
1621**

## CALASANCTIUS PREPARATORY SCHOOL, 1957-1991

On September 8, 1957 the Calasancius Preparatory School opened in Buffalo, New York, with Fr. Stephen Gerencser Sch. P. as the first Headmaster. The school was founded to provide for the special needs of academically gifted boys from the fifth through twelfth grades. In 1964, the school began accepting girls, and in 1970 the school expanded to include first through twelfth grades. From 1957 to 1960, the school was

staffed by the community of Derby. On July 14, 1960 a separate house of Buffalo was canonically erected. Fr. Gerencser was appointed the first rector. At the time of its closing in June 1991, Calasancius School was neither owned by the Piarist Order, nor was it a diocesan school. Rather, the school was owned by a Board of Trustees comprised of Piarists and lay people. Fr. Gerencser, the founder, passed away in 1993.



Fr. Stephen Gerencser

## BUECHELE KEEPS ON GOING AND GOING

When the average man turns 65, his thoughts often turn to more sedate and leisurely activities, but when Rev. Andrew Buechele, the superior of the Washington Community, turned 65, his thoughts were that he is now in a new marathon category. In celebration of his milestone, Buechele ran his 53<sup>rd</sup> marathon in October, the Washington DC Marine Corps Marathon.

A marathon is a cross-country footrace of 26 miles, 385 yards. He finished that marathon with a time of 4:38:28, which placed him 30<sup>th</sup> out of 128 runners in the male 65-69 age bracket. This was the 18<sup>th</sup> time he has finished the Marine Corps Marathon. The marathon began and ended near the Two Jima Memorial.

Buechele had been running for many years before he entered his

first marathon, the New York City Marathon, in 1982. He was then working at Covenant House in New York. During the 1981 marathon, he jumped in and discovered that he enjoyed the race, so he decided to start training for it so he could officially give it a try the next year, and he has been hooked ever since.

His best time was 3:08:55, which he ran in 1985 in the DC Marathon. His best finish was when he came in ninth overall in the 1985 Finger Lakes Marathon. That marathon was also his most challenging, since it required running over two mountain ridges between Ithaca and Marathon, New York.

When asked why a person of his age was still running marathons after 25 years, Father Buechele responded, "Because I can still do it." So keep on running Father Andy.



*"The road to becoming a learned and prudent person begins in elementary school where one behaves like a fool before the eyes of men, allowing oneself to be carried like a small donkey. This is the true doctrine, but understood by few, because it is contrary to the senses and to human prudence; it is followed, too, by few."*

## DEVON NEWS



Devon Preparatory School celebrated the 450th anniversary of the birth of St. Joseph Calasanz during the visit of Fr. General.

A special Mass took place in the gymnasium on November 2. All of the students, teachers and staff attended this celebration.

To commemorate the day and the visit, Fr. General granted a holiday to everybody.

Devon Prep presented *A man for all Seasons* as its fall production in the foyer of Calasanctius Hall.

## CALLAN CELEBRATES SILVER JUBILEE

Rev. John Callan, of the Fort Lauderdale Community, celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary of priestly ordination on September 21 in the School Chapel. A reception followed in the St. John the Baptist Parish Hall.

Rev. Oscar Alonso, the rector of the Ft. Lauderdale Community was the homilist. He spoke of Father Callan's role as a priest, a Piarist, and a teacher. Eight Piarist priests, six diocesan and religious order priests, the Piarist seminarians, the two Franciscan sisters now teaching at Cardinal

Gibbons High School, his mother, his aunt, and some lay guests were in attendance at the Anniversary Mass celebrating the Feast of the Thirteen Piarist Spanish Martyrs.

Father Callan was ordained September 18, 1982 at Visitation BVM Parish in Trooper, PA by Bishop John Graham, an Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia. Father Callan taught mathematics and religion at Devon Preparatory School until 1994, when he was transferred to Cardinal Gibbons High School, where he also taught religion and mathematics.

Fr. Callan has been the Provincial Treasurer since 2003.



*Fr. Mario presents Fr. Callan with the Papal Blessing*

**St. Joseph Calasanz  
1622**

## NEWSLETTER

**Is the official Bulletin of the Piarist USA Province. If you or anyone else wishes to receive it , let us know by sending an e-mail.**

**You can also view it on the**

**web at**

**<http://www.piaristusa.org/newsletter>**

**Editor: Fr. Jose P. Burgues**

*Currently the Development Team is working on the Adopt A Seminarian project. The idea is to help defray the considerable costs for our current 18 seminarians. Through the financial generosity of our relatives, friends, co-workers and alumni, we hope to be successful. For more information on our current seminarians visit the Piarist web page.*

*The next project on the horizon for the Development Team will involve the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Calasanctius school. Stay tuned for details!*

**(Note from the USA Province Development Office)**

# KENTUCKY NEWS

The Piarist School freshmen received training in CPR in September as part of their Health Class. Two nurses from Our Lady of the Way Hospital spent three hours showing an interactive video and teaching the students basic adult CPR. Each student practiced on their own manikin.

Each year about one million Americans suffer a heart attack and of that number about 700,000 die. Recent medical studies have shown that about 20 percent of those deaths could have been prevented if CPR had been given immediately. Many of the freshmen live with elderly relatives and several perform child care services. Learning CPR was of particular interest to them.

The CPR certificate each student received after completing the class is valid for two years.

The Junior Class read *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* as part of their



*CPR training for the freshmen*

American Literature Class. They then went to the Mountain Arts Center on October 23 and saw a live theatrical production of the popular story. "The students enjoyed seeing what they had read brought to life," said Junior English teacher Melissa Caudill.

The Piarist School Outreach Ministry is providing Thanksgiving dinner and food for a week for ten area needy families. Students prepared the menu and shopped for the food, which was given to the families before Thanksgiving.

## THE UFEC CELEBRATES 150 YEARS OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS IN CUBA AND 450TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOSEPH CALASANZ



*Fr. Vicente Faubell*

The UFEC wants to commemorate in an appropriate way the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Pious Schools in Cuba. Many events have been programmed for this year, in Miami, in Puerto Rico and New York.

In Miami, Msgr. Benjamin Castillo, Bishop of Tabasco, Mexico, presided at the Eucharist celebrated in honor of our Holy Founder, on the 26th of August.

To commemorate the 450th Anniversary of St. Joseph Cala-

sanz, the UFEC invited Fr. Vicente Faubell, an illustrious Piarist historian and scholar, who delivered in September at SEPI a conference entitled "Joseph Calasanz, Pioneer of Education for All"

One memorable experience was the pilgrimage to the Calasanzian places in Spain (Peralta, Zaragoza and Barcelona) organized by UFEC. Almost 30 members of UFEC from New York, New Jersey, Miami, Sao Paulo (Brazil), Guipuzcoa, Barcelona and Tarragona joined it. A special tribute of gratitude was paid to the Piarists Fathers of Catalunya for

their contribution to Cuba during the last 150 years .

To culminate the celebrations, an exhibit was prepared on November 17 at SEPI about the History of the Pious Schools in Cuba, and Saint Joseph Calasanz and his work.

Bishop Felix Lazaro Sch.P., of Ponce, presided at the Eucharist celebrated at SEPI on the 18th of November, concelebrated by Bishop Felipe Estevez, Auxiliary bishop of Miami, Bishop Pablo Varela of Panama and alumnus of Cuba, and other priests.



*The cutting of the ribbon of the exhibit by the Presidents of the UFEC and Fr. Mario*