

NEWSLETTER



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PERPETUAL PROFESSION IN MIAMI



The celebration of the Feast of St. Joseph Calasanz and the Solemn Profession of Nelson Henao went very well. Mass began at 4 pm. The Ft. Lauderdale Piarist Community, the Miami Piarist Community, Fr. Powers, Msgr. Bryce, and the former Piarists living in the area were all in attendance along with 50 friends. Father Mario presided over the bi-lingual Mass.

Following the profession, there was a reception in the newly tiled courtyard, which was

followed by the traditional delicious pig roast. Following dinner, there was much singing and celebration. Nelson gave everyone a memorial bookmark to remember the celebration.

Afterwards Nelson left for Devon where he teaches for the present school year. The Devon community will plan his deaconate ordination celebration for sometime in the fall or winter, and his priestly ordination will be during our Provincial retreat in June in Miami.

FR. PROVINCIAL'S CORNER



The Piarist Order has moved from the inter-demarcationality of the General Chapter of 1997 to the Restructuring for Revitalization of the General Chapter of 2003.

The General Chapter of 2003 gave a mandate to the General Congregation to move in this direction, convinced that a careful restructuring is already unavoidable in our Order.

By doing this, the Chapter has followed the example of many religious institutes that have gone before us thru this process with effective creativity. The General Chapter insists that the restructuring is for revitalization, understanding by revitalization "the interior renewal of each religious, of the communities and of the demarcations, discovering the values and the commitments proper to our religious consecration."

Revitalization means, not the spirit of survival that is condemned to death and disappearing, but the "wish of living, that sets in motion in the individual and the institution, the creativity that opens them to the future."

Restructuring is one of the priorities of our Provincial Chapter

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MIAMI NEWS



"You should know that the shortest and easiest path or way to be exalted to the own knowledge and from here to the attributes of mercy, prudence and infinite patience and goodness of God is to humble yourself to give light to the children and specially to those who are more abandoned by all. This is a base and vile job to the eyes of the world and very few want to humble to it, and God uses to give hundredfold."

St. Joseph Calasanz, 1629

Some dates to remember:

Birthdays:

November:

8. Br. Jesús Aguilar, 28

December

6: Br. Nicolás Zunún, 30
13: Br. Javier Vanegas, 37

January

16: Nov. Isaac Almanza, 30

February

20: Fr. Oscar Alonso, 69
23: Nov. Martín Elpidio, 36



Saturday, October 4, 2008 was a landmark day for the Piarists in Miami. Archbishop John C Favalora blessed "Casa Calasanz," a new building which will serve as a residence for the Piarist seminarians. The comple-

tion of this building is the last stage of the project begun in 1992 when he purchased the property for SEPI.

The blessing of the residence was just one part of

the celebration of the 30th anniversary of SEPI. On the previous evening, more than 400 people attended a celebrated Mass in the cathedral. A reception featuring Paella Escolapia followed the blessing of the residence.

Fellow Piarists from Puerto Rico, Fort Lauderdale, Devon and Kentucky were also present for the celebration. After the meal, guests were entertained with an artistic Hispanic program, which included two Christian music bands and three groups of folklore dance.

The Board of Directors of SEPI met on the morning of October 4. They approved modifications of the by-laws, in which SEPI is entrusted to the Piarist Fathers' United States Province. Father Jesus M. Lecea, Superior General of the Order, who was present at the meeting, thanked the Board of Directors for their trust.

Long live SEPI.

VOCATION STORIES

My name is Nelson Henao. I am an "Adult Vocation." When I was 35 years old, I realized that my life did not have a clear direction. Nothing I did made sense. Jesus then appeared in my life. Over the course of the next 11 years, my life changed as the Spirit of the Lord filled my heart little by little.

My journey began when a priest from Colombia visited Miami for a month. He was the instrument who led me to answer the call to religious life.

The path to the Piarist Fathers began one day while I was working in a restaurant. Two of my regular customers were Father Joseph Kershner and Father Charles Newburn. I expressed to them my interest in exploring a religious vocation. They were very receptive and invited me to visit them at Cardinal Gibbons High School in Fort Lauderdale.

This relationship culminated in my admission to the formation program in Miami in the year 2002. I was 46 years old.



These years have been a great blessing for me. I thank the Piarist Fathers for believing in my vocation, and I thank the Lord for calling me, unworthy as I am.

DEVON NEWS

"UP FOR A CAUSE"

Our Christian Action Program high school students raised \$33,000.00 for the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. They operated a 12 hour "Up for a Cause" night in our school gym. One hundred sixty four students stayed up from 8pm Friday night, October 10, to 8am Saturday morning, October 11, in our school gymnasium. They played games, watched movies, played board games, and ate food for 12 straight hours. Each student was sponsored by at least a \$175.00 donation to stay up all night. The money that they collected, \$33,000.00, will be used to support programs at the hospital to help the children in the

hospital have a simulated home-like atmosphere in their hospital rooms.

Fr. Mesko leaves us

Fr. Louis Mesko, the oldest religious of the Order and the last of the pioneers of our USA Province, died on October 4. His funeral took place on the 7th. Requiescat in pace.

On October 25th a Memorial Mass for Fr. Stephen Mustos was celebrated in St. Mary's Chapel of our Devon Prep's campus. For 17 years Fr. Mustos was the Principal of our school.



Fr. Oscar, Fr. Mesko.

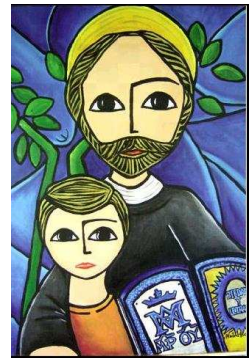
Meeting of the North American Sector

The Provincial Congregations of the United States and Mexico and the Vice-Provincial Congregations of the Californias and New York-Puerto Rico gathered in Miami for their annual meeting on September 23 and 24.

The main topic of the meeting was the restructuring of the Order. The demarcations of the United States and New York-Puerto Rico have already made some steps towards a merger. They now share a juniorate for philosophy students in Puerto Rico and a juniorate for theology students in New York City.



FF. Mascorro, Brito, Anaya, Flores, Novell (1st. Row); Hernández, Lacruz, Capó, Biel, Buechele, Vizcaino, Torres and Powers (standing)



FORT LAUDERDALE NEWS

Bishop Coleman Carroll of Miami invited the Piarist Fathers and the Franciscan Sisters of Mary Immaculate to work together with a small group of diocesan priests and lay people to establish Cardinal Gibbons High School in 1961. In the early years of the school, the administrators continued a tradition begun in the parochial schools of Europe. They set aside one day per year to celebrate and honor the founders of the two religious communities, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Joseph Calasanctius. They felt that a good understanding about these two men could help develop in the faculty, staff and students some sense of a unified religious fervor. For various reasons, this tradition stopped after a few years in the school.

The Theology Department and the Campus Ministry program of the school have decided to reinstate this tradition. On October 22 the students participated in Masses during their theology



classes. The prayers, readings and homily for each Mass centered on the life of St. Francis of Assisi.

The faculty, staff and students of Cardinal Gibbons High School have been strongly influenced by the fine example and work ethic of the Franciscan Sisters. The Piarist Fathers have been truly blessed to work with such great women.

The Theology Department and the Campus Ministry program intend to set aside one day in the second semester in honor of St. Joseph Calasanctius.

On a sad note, Mrs. Vera Connolly passed away on September 27 at the age of 87 years. Vera had been the housekeeper for the Piarist Fathers for many years in the 1970's and 1980's. May she rest in peace.

"That word 'affliction' is much disagreeable to me because nobody can be more afflicted than me, since many times arrive to me many motives of affliction, but considering that everything comes from the hands of the Lord and what I do, I do it for His love, being He such a kind and benign Father, I bear with patience all things, ready to die before abandoning the enterprise, and in that way I reject all affliction and melancholy.

**St. Joseph Calanz,
1629**

DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Our Development Office is currently working on the second annual appeal to the friends and relatives of Father Leonard Gendernalik, Sch.P. Last year we established a scholarship in his memory. Thanks to our benefactors' generosity, we were able to help pay for the tuition of our 19 seminarians.



In addition, our Development Office has created *The Calasanctius School Update*, a newsletter insert for the alumni and friends of Calasanctius School in Buffalo. The first issue is already posted on our web site

Our coming feasts:

November 27: Patronage of Our Holy Founder

February 26: St. Paula Montal

March 8: Blessed Faustino Míguez

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

“It is no secret that the ministry of the Piarist Fathers greatly depends upon the generosity of our benefactors. Please consider us in your estate planning.”

(Note from the USA Province Development

Vocational Retreat

For the Piarist, Youth Is Our Concern. If you think the Lord may be calling you, come to the next vocational retreat November 27-30 at the Southeast Pastoral institute in Miami, Florida.

THE LAST OF THE PIONEERS LEFT US

Fr. Louis Mesko, a very long life at the service of all

Father Louis Mesko was born on April 23, 1911 in Baja, Hungary. His parents were Zoltan and Margit Mesko, and they had six children. His father was a high ranking army officer, and he served in the Parliament from 1917 until 1935 and from 1939 until 1945. At the end of World War II, he was imprisoned. He was allowed to leave the prison just a few days before his death in 1959. Two of Fr. Mesko's brothers were also officers in the Hungarian Army, and they died during the war. His oldest sister died at a young age. One brother became a doctor, and another brother sold religious goods. Mr. and Mrs. Mesko wanted to provide a good education for all of their children. When Louis finished his elementary studies in his home town, they sent him to school at the Piarist high school in Budapest. There he got to know Fr. Joseph Batori, his teacher. Moved by his example, he decided to join the Piarists, and on August 23, 1929 he entered the novitiate in Vac. He made his first profession as a Piarist religious on August 28, 1930.

He continued his clerical and civil studies in Budapest from 1930 until 1936. He made his solemn profession on September 8, 1933. He was ordained a priest in Budapest on June 14, 1936.

He started his Piarist ministry teaching Hungarian, Latin, science and religion at Kecskemet (1936-38). He was later sent to Budapest (1938-40), Debrecen (1940-41), Satoralja-Ujhely (1941-43) and Kolozsvár (1943-44). In 1944 the war reached Hungary. He had to move for some time to Vac, Tata and Vezsprem, replacing other teachers. During this time, he researched the derivation of Hungarian names, which he published in 1934. His research on the derivation of Hungarian pre-Christian names (800 handwritten pages) was interrupted by the war. He published several articles on the subject between 1935 and 1945 and again in 1970.

In 1944 he received an order to join the Hungarian Army as a chaplain in the military hospital of Vezsprem with the rank of lieutenant. He stayed with his hospital unit when it withdrew to avoid the approaching Russian Army. His unit was taken by the United States Army in May 1945 in Landshut, Germany. He was freed after just a few days. Since he could not return to Hungary, he decided to help another Hungarian priest, Fr. Zoltan Kotai, to organize a ministry to the Hungarian refugees. Fr. Francis Rozsaly, another Hungarian Piarist, joined him. He developed the idea of registering all of the Hungarian refugees in order to facilitate their identification and to help



reunite families. Keeping records and organizing files had already become a passion for Fr. Mesko. He would continue keeping information on index cards about people and books his whole life.

Two more Hungarian Piarists, Geza Gallow and Ladislaus Irtanyi, joined them in 1946. In August some of the Hungarian refugee Piarists thought about the possibility of starting a Piarist community in the United States. Fathers Gerencser and Batori gave their full support to the idea, and Fr. Vincent Tomek, Provincial Superior of Hungary, approved the idea. In 1947 Fr. Mesko went to Austria, and in 1948 he arrived in Rome. Fr. Tomek, then the Superior General, assigned him to the United States. In March 1948 he went to Spain to learn Spanish, while he was waiting for an American visa. In September 1948 he went with Fathers Gerencser and Rozsaly to Cuba. They waited in one of the communities in Havana for their visa until the end of February 1949. With their visas in hand, they went to Los Angeles, where they remained until the end of 1950.

Fr. Mesko and the other two Piarists joined the group that was already established in Buffalo, NY. Fr. Mesko worked in some parishes while he obtained a degree to teach in the United States. Fr. Mesko was not in very good health at that time, and his doctors recommended that he move to a different climate in order to heal his lungs. Therefore, he moved for several months to Albuquerque, NM, where he ministered to the Hispanics.

He then moved to Lackawanna NY, where he joined the Piarists teaching at Father Baker High School, but he did not teach there. When this community

moved to Philadelphia in August 1954, he accompanied them. In September he started to work in a diocesan high school, teaching Spanish. His health was still poor, and in February 1955 he had to go to the hospital for several weeks. In 1956 he became a United States citizen.

In 1956 he was a member of the first Piarist team to teach at Devon Preparatory School. He taught there until 1960. He was then sent to Calasanctius High School in Buffalo. He taught there Hungarian, Latin and history. He was in charge of the library, and he cataloged the books. When he arrived, there were 3,000 books. When he left in 1969, there were 14,000.

He returned in 1969 to Devon, and he remained in that community until the moment of his death on October 4, 2008. He was buried at Calvary Cemetery in Conshohocken, PA. He was the oldest Piarist of the United States Province and of the whole Order.

During the last years of his long life, he lost part of his mobility, but he kept all of his mental lucidity and religious piety. Besides the time dedicated to the celebration of the Mass and to prayer, he spent most of the day reading and writing. He welcomed visitors with a warm smile and was delighted to talk with them in English, Hungarian or Spanish. His conversations always demonstrated some of the kindness and holiness that he had developed over the years. After visiting with Fr. Mesko, a visitor often wished: "I would like to become like him".

The Piarists of the United States Province thank the Lord for having given us a witness of His love in the person of Fr. Louis Mesko, and for having allowed him to remain among us for such a long period of time. The new generation of Piarists in the Province has been enriched with the acquaintance of Fr. Mesko. He was the last living pioneer of the foundation of our Province, and his death closes the foundational period. May we be able to continue in the steps of our founders.

Contributions in the name of Father Louis Mesko, Sch.P. may be made to the Piarist Fathers' Seminarian and Retiree Fund, 4605 Bayview Drive, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308.