

Secular Servite News

Spring 2009



Homelessness in our Own Backyard

Deacon Jack Rhine OSSM

Mary, Queen of the Servants Community, Palm Bay, Florida

I have been aware of homelessness for quite some time, but it was not until our parish Just Faith (www.justfaith.org) group invited the director of the local soup kitchen, serving the Melbourne-Palm Bay, Florida area, to be a guest speaker at one of our weekly meetings that the plight of the homeless moved from the background into the foreground of my mind. The director brought a man who had been homeless for some time to speak at our meeting. This resulted in a visit by our group, which includes three other Secular Servites; Tony Ferrer OSSM, Karen Rhine OSSM and Betty Schwind OSSM, to the camp where this man lived.

We packed our cars with food, camping gear, blankets, and personal hygiene supplies and visited the camp inhabited by five men, two women and a dog located in a wooded area off of a main street within stone's throw of downtown. We were surprised to learn that in about a half mile along this well traveled street there are as many as two dozen homeless camp sites.

The visit was an incredible learning experience. The residents of the camp did not fit the commonly held stereotype of homeless; dirty, lazy, addicts who want to live off of others. The camp was clean, the residents used a camp shower, and they were all willing to work at any honest labor they could find. They did not want a handout, they wanted a hand up. Seven unrelated people lived as a family. Pictured to the right is their communal kitchen.



Finding work has been a challenge for the homeless in our current economy. People without home addresses or that use the soup kitchen for an address do not get hired. This homeless group, like many others, has skilled people who have backgrounds in computers, the building trades, landscaping, cooking and catering as well as other marketable skills. They are willing to work at anything. From my own experience in my house, they do have a good work ethic and produce quality at a level of any other professional. People that I have recommended them to have been thrilled with the results of their labor. I am working with them to build a handyman business. Although this group of people has very little, they are always willing to help other homeless people who are in need. The person with a computer background gives his time to non-profit organizations.

Here are a few facts about homeless. In 2007, there were over 3.5 million homeless people in the United States. Homeless populations are typically understated because many people are not easy to find. The number of homeless has greatly increased due to the current state of the economy. Over one third of the homeless are families. Children are the fastest growing group of homeless. 40% of the homeless work full

time. In East Central Florida, a person making minimum wage cannot afford a one bedroom apartment. Once someone becomes homeless it is difficult to find another home because of needing first month, last month and as much as a third month of rent for a deposit. Availability of affordable housing has decreased and in our county there is a shelter bed for only one in six homeless and the majority of these beds go to pregnant and battered women. Most of our population is only a lost paycheck or two, a serious illness or a serious accident away from being homeless due to the escalating cost of living and large number of people without health insurance.



After the last OSSM National Council meeting, I took Fr. Vidal Martinez OSM, Fr. Hugh Guentner OSM and Theresa Orozco OSSM to visit the homeless camp of the people I have befriended. They served us a great traditional biscuits and sausage gravy breakfast and spoke with us about their experiences. Pictured at left. from left to right are: Fr. Hugh, Dave, Frank, Fr. Vidal and Theresa.

There is some good news for this group. Out of the original group of seven people, four are no longer homeless. Two moved into an apartment with friends. A neighbor of one of the Secular Servites in our community donated a motor home, pictured at right to Frank and Dave and they are living at a RV site in the area. My experience with the homeless has transformed

them from invisible people to real people, some of who have become good friends. It has brought home to me again the fact that you cannot judge people by their circumstance or the stereotype of their circumstance, but by who they are as people. As I travel through the area that I live in, each time I pass one of the many wooded spaces, I wonder how many people live behind the trees and how they will make out when the wet and hurricane season comes to Florida. Although, I have met some people that meet the stereotype of the homeless, I know that many are good, holy people who need a friend and a hand up.



Our Servite Presence in Catalonia, Spain

Fr. Vidal Martinez, OSM

General Secretary for Secular Order and Lay Groups

Catalonia is in northeast Spain. It borders France and Andorra to the north, the Province of Aragón to the west, Valencia to the south and the Mediterranean Sea to the east. Its official language is Catalán. The capital city is Barcelona. Catalonia is divided into four Provinces: Barcelona, Tarragona, Lleida and Girona. Its territory corresponds to most of the historical territory of the former Principality of Catalonia.

The Servite Friars establish a stable presence of the Order in Barcelona in the 17th Century. In 1619, the Confraternity of Our Lady of Bonsuccés is established at the Servite Convent in Barcelona, to receive

all lay people who felt a special devotion for this Marian avocation. In 1660, this Confraternity becomes the Confraternity of the Mother of Sorrows, as granted by the Papal Bull of Innocent X, which placed all lay associations of the Servants of Mary under the protection of the Mother of Sorrows. In 1661, the Confraternity of the Mother of Sorrows organizes a great procession on Palm Sunday through the entire city of Barcelona. This will eventually become the pattern to be followed by all the Confraternities of the Mother of Sorrows (known as Congregations of the Mother of Sorrows) throughout the Region of Catalonia. During the 17th and early 18th Century, there were some 100 "Congregations of the Mother of Sorrows" established throughout Catalonia.

The original Congregation of Barcelona has disappeared as well as many of the others. At present there are some 30 Congregations of the Mother of Sorrows in Catalonia. During my recent visit in March, 2009, I was able to visit 15 of these remaining Congregations, due to the great hospitality and assistance of Joan Rosás, OSSM and other members of this Servite presence. Among those I visited are the Congregations of Girona (1687), Vic (1689), Mataró (1693), Arboç (1694), Besalú (1699), Manresa (1704), Amer (1710), Badalona (1723). Each Congregation is primarily responsible for the upkeep of the Sorrowful Mother Church, Chapel or Altar in their city or town as well as the organization of the annual Procession through the city or town streets. In 1835 all religious were expelled from Spain and all church properties were expropriated by the government. This left the Congregations without the presence of the Servite friars. In spite of this and many other obstacles, these 30 Congregations have survived for 300 years or more and continue to enthusiastically promote this devotion and spirituality of the Mother of Sorrows (la Mare de Deu dels Dolors). At present, there is a gathering of the members on the First Sunday of Lent each year. In March 2009, I attended the 13th Annual Encounter of the "Congregantes" de la Mare de Deu de Dolors.

Day of Reflection for Secular Orders - Diocese of Orlando, FL **Donald Siple, OSSM** **Secular Community, Lady Lake, FL**

On January 16, 2009, we held our second Day of Reflection for members of the Secular (Third) Orders in the Diocese of Orlando. The Day of Reflection was conducted at St. Timothy Parish, Lady Lake, Florida. All interested Secular Order members were invited to come and learn about other Secular Orders: their history and spirituality.

The Day of Reflection began with the celebration of the Eucharist, which was followed by breakfast. Then, we had the opportunity to participate in the workshops and exhibits presented by the different Secular Orders. This same process continued in the afternoon after lunch. We concluded the day with a procession from the Parish Hall to the Church for Adoration and Benediction. Bishop Thomas Wenski has been very supportive and sent a representative as the guest speaker of the day.

The first Day of Reflection was held in June, 2008. This is our first opportunity to meet each other and to get to know about the different Secular Orders. We began to share with each other about our Secular Orders and learned a lot from each other. We are pleased to know that we all have in common the goal of working for our Lord and our Blessed Mother, Mary. It is great to be a member of the Secular Order and to be a part of the Servite Family.



Promoviendo la Devoción a la Dolorosa

Fr. Vidal Martinez, OSM

General Secretary for Secular Order and Lay Groups

Los Seglares Siervos de María, Fraternidad Nuestra Señora de la Salud, Parroquia Santísima Trinidad, Santiago, República Dominicana promueven la devoción a Nuestra Señora de los Dolores por la emisora radial. Cada viernes, los Seglares van a la emisora para rezar el Rosario de los Siete Dolores y las Oraciones en Honor a San Peregrino. De esta forma, usando los medios de comunicación, buscan dar a conocer la Orden de los Siervos de María y su espiritualidad y carisma a todos los radio oyentes. Es un apostolado que promete traer buenos resultados para dar a conocer la Orden Seglar. Los que escuchan la programación tienen oportunidad de llamar para pedir oración y para exponer sus intenciones y necesidades, además de hacer cualquier otro comentario.

La Fraternidad Nuestra Señora de la Salud agradecería cualquier apoyo (con sus oraciones) y ayuda (con sus donaciones) que le puedan ofrecer sus hermanos y hermanas Seglares Siervos y Siervas de María. Les cuesta \$85 cada mes por una hora semanal al aire. Si quieren colaborar con este apostolado, pueden enviar su donación a: Orden Seglar, 3121 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60612-2729. Es una linda forma de apoyar este ministerio y de colaborar en la promoción de la devoción a Nuestra Señora de los Dolores y a San Peregrino.



Newly Elected Provincial Council

Fr. Vidal Martinez, OSM

General Secretary for Secular Order and Lay Groups

The Servite Friars of the United States of America Province gathered together for the Provincial Chapter of Elections, Anaheim, California, February 16-20, 2009. The Prior General, Fr. Angel M. Ruiz Garnica, OSM, was present for the sessions conducted during the Provincial Chapter. Fr. Angel was accompanied by Fr. Eugene Smith, OSM, a member of the General Council. Two months prior to the Provincial Chapter, Fr. John Fontana, OSM was elected Prior Provincial. During the Provincial Chapter, Fr. Luke Stano, OSM was elected the Assistant Provincial and the following were elected as Provincial Councilors: Fr. Gerald Horan, OSM; Fr. Michael Pontarelli, OSM; Fr. Frank Falco, OSM. Let us remember them in our prayers as they seek to lead and guide the members of the USA Province during the next three years: 2009-2012.



Our Little School: Ecole de L'enfant Jesus

In the city of Petit-Goâve, Haiti at the Servants of Mary Center, there is a “little school” called the Child Jesus School. It is an elementary and vocational school for poor and needy children 10 years of age and older. These children would never be able to attend school or receive an education, mainly because their parents or relatives are not able to pay the monthly fees required by the schools in Petit-Goâve. The Child Jesus School provides a basic education for the children, as well as providing school supplies, uniforms and a nourishing meal each day the children attend class. The children also receive religious formation and instructions to prepare them for the Sacraments as well as learning the basic prayers and, of course, songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. There is a staff of 12 men and women, who care for the 67 students presently enrolled from 1st to 4th grade. Because of the lack of space at the present time, many other needy children have, unfortunately, been turned away.

Thanks to the generous contributions received from Secular Servites and communities as well as friends and supporters, a playground and basketball court has been constructed for the children. What a joy this has been for the children! They can play in a safe and protected environment under the supervision and watchful care of the staff. The children and staff are very grateful to all the donors who have made the playground a reality for them. Those who wish may make a donation for the purchase of the necessary sports and playground equipment.

Each day, before returning home at the end of the school day, the children sit together and enjoy a nourishing meal that is prepared and served on school grounds. For many of the children, this is their principal meal for the day. We are grateful for a Secular Servite who has been providing a monthly donation to help cover the cost of the purchase of the food.

After the children have concluded their elementary education, they are subsequently offered the opportunity to participate in a 3 year vocational, professional education in one of the following areas: cabinetmaking, carpentry, tailoring, mechanics, masonry, electricity, art, cooking and baking.



Odette Morency, OSSM, a member of Salve Regina Secular Order Community, St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Kissimmee, Florida, is the administrator and overseer of all activities, programs, faculty, staff, and needs of the Child Jesus School. If anyone is interested in visiting and spending time with the children, the staff or the parents, Odette and Farrell Morency are very happy to receive them in their home and will assist them during the time of their visit. For further information, please contact Fr. Vidal Martínez, OSM: osmsecular@aol.com, 773-354-9561. Fr. Vidal Martínez, OSM has been the Spiritual Advisor for the project in Haiti for some 30 years.

Welcome to Our Servite Family!

“After completing the period of probation, ... we ask to be received into the Secuar Order of the Servants of Mary. We wish to follow Christ as people committed to our state of life, giving witness to the Gospel in this earthly city. In this way, we wish to serve the Blessed Virgin Mary according to the ideal of life of the Servants.”

(Rite of the Promise)

“Después de la experiencia realizada...pedimos ser admitidos en la Orden Seglar de los Siervos de María. Comprometidos según nuestra propia condición de vida, queremos dar testimonio de los valores evangélicos en medio de la ciudad terrena; queremos seguir a Cristo y servir a la Virgen María según el ideal de vida de los Siervos”.

(Rito de la Promesa)

Our Lady of the Assumption Community, Denver, CO

May 4, 2008

Pam Tatman

Jovita Martinez

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Community, Denver, CO

July 5, 2008

Joe Capri

St. Philip Benizi Community, St. Petersburg, FL

August 23, 2008

Marguerite D’Amato

Phyllis Fielder

Robyn S. Kremer

Terry M. Kremer

Mary Kutz

Evelyn Powell

Blessed James, Defender of the Poor Community, Mobile, AL

September 14, 2008

Mattie Horn

Our Sorrowful Mother Community, Blue Island, IL

November 8, 2008

Patricia Baylock

Mary at the Foot of the Cross Community, Anaheim, CA

November 16

Roxanne Barerra

Angie Bowen

Jamie Carter



Jovita Martinez, Pam Tatman
Our Lady of the Assumption Comm, Denver



Our Lady of Sorrows Community
Lady Lake, FL

Comunidad Nuestra Senora de la Providencia, Hartford, CT

November 22, 2008

Felicia Cruz

María Raquel Lopez

Valentin Rosario

Marilyn Viena



Comunidad Nuestra Senora de la Providencia
Hartford, CT

San Peregrino Comunidad, Kissimmee, FL

December 13, 2008

Adalberto Irizarry

Layda Marquez

Igrail Morales

Isabel Morales



San Peregrino Comunidad
Kissimmee, FL

St. Peregrine Community, Rice Lake, WI

February 16, 2009

Agnes Feidt

Marie Hillman

Our Lady of Sorrows Community, Chicago, IL

February 22

Darlene Brox

Lawrence Logan

Mickey Martinez

Guadalupe Mendez



Our Lady of Sorrows Community
Chicago, IL

Our Lady of Sorrows Community, Lady Lake, FL

March 13

Fr. Gene Weis



St. Peregrine Community
Rice Lake, WI

**A Note of Gratitude
OSM Contemplative Nuns
Nampula, Mozambique**

Sister M. Juliana, OSM, Prioress, Mater Dei Monastery, Servite Contemplative Nuns, Nampula, Mozambique expresses her sincerest gratitude to all in the Servite Family and Friends who have so generously responded to their plea for help. Besides Mater Dei Monastery in Nampula, there are two more monasteries of the Servite Contemplative Nuns in Mozambique. Mater Dei Monastery has several young women who are in the various stages of formation: Aspirants, Postulants, Novices, Simple Professed and the Solemn Professed Nuns.



Every Sunday some 80 Secular Servites come to the Monastery grounds to spend the day with the Servite Contemplative Nuns for Sunday Eucharist, Community Prayer, Ongoing and Initial Formation and to strengthen the bonds of community and friendship among all. There are two OSSM Fraternities: Mater Dei and Seven Holy Founders under the care and spiritual guidance of the Servite Contemplative Nuns. Some of the Secular Servites, among other activities, assist the Nuns in caring for the 60 orphans that reside in the House of Nazareth on the grounds of Mater Dei Monastery.



Recently Sister Juliana wrote:

“We are doing better. It seems that the cholera is diminishing. God willing. There are now many people in two areas near the sea that are dying of hunger, because during the past 4 months it has rained only on four days (and this is the rainy season). Therefore, they have no harvest and nothing to eat...already several have died of hunger. A mother hung herself because she had children and her husband abandoned her. Since she had nothing to feed her children, she killed herself. We are organizing in the local Church collections and already a truckload of food has been sent out.

Greetings on behalf of all the children.”



If you or your OSSM Community wish to send a donation in support of the Servite Contemplative Nuns of Nampula, please send your donations to: SERVITE SECULAR ORDER, 3121 W JACKSON BLVD, CHICAGO IL 60612.

Servite Peace Pots



Hand crafted and glazed pots with the Servite logo are available directly from the potter, Leslie Ann Curry, for \$35.00 each, postpaid in the United States. Candles placed in the pots illuminate the Servite Logo.

The pots are approximately 6" tall and 4.5" in diameter and are available in blue and beige.

For each Servite pot purchased, \$5.00 will be donated to the Servite School in Petit Guave, Haiti.

Contact Leslie at LAMCurry@aol.com to order pots. If you do not have email, call her at (321)223-2669.

Her other pots and information about ordering can be found at www.peacepotsbyleslie.com

Chicago, Illinois
Our Lady of Sorrows Secular Community
Margie Natal, OSSM, Prioress

Yesterday, at the Dignity Breakfast, there was a shortage of our regular volunteers. Some were ill or out-of-town, or had car problems. But we had help! Along with teens that came with their School Principal from Christ the King High School, we had Secular Servites from two Chicagoland Communities; St. Alexis/St. Juliana and Annunicata.

It just so happened that we had an all time high number of homeless to feed. Who would have guessed that when we had such a large shortage of volunteers, our Secular Servite Communities were there to lend a hand. We average 200 at each Dignity Breakfast. We wanted them to feel welcome and provide them with a meal they were looking forward to eating. We do not know when they will get their next meal and they do not know either. As our Pastor and Assistant, Fr. Chris, says, "They are our guest, our visitors." Fr. Chris is one of our regular helpers for the Dignity Breakfast.

Our Chicagoland Secular Servite groups assist with the selling of raffle tickets that helps pay for the Dignity Breakfast (which the Our Lady of Sorrows Basilica Secular Order pays for on the 2nd Saturday of the month; they, on occasion, assist us in serving the homeless also. We open the doors at 7:00 a.m. which means we must be ready to serve at that time. The cooking, cleaning, set up all has to be done before 7:00am.

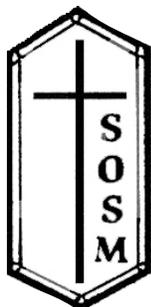
We are blessed to have a loving, caring Secular Servite family. I'm glad to be a part of it. I am very grateful and on behalf of the 241 homeless we served I say. Thank you.

**Secular Servite News is published by the
Office of the National Assistant to the
Servite Secular Order**

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**www.servite.org
www.servidimaria.org**



Coming Servite Feasts

May 4 - St. Peregrine

May 11 - Bl. Benincasa of Montepulciano

May 12 - Bl. Francis of Siena

May 30 - Bl. James Philip Bertoni

June 19 - St. Juliana Falconieri, Patroness of the Secular Order

June 27 - Bl. Thomas of Orvieto

July 1 - Bl. Ferdinand Maria Baccilieri, SOSM

July 4 - Bl. Ubald of Borgo Sansepolcro

July 13 - St. Clelia Barbieri