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La Jornada Mundial de la Juventud: Madrid

An Oblate Associate Reflects on World Youth Day Experience

by Riley Schaff

My pilgrimage to Madrid began with a simple, seemingly insignificant comment by Jake Vanderweide, a fellow Oblate Associate. Just a year prior to the trip, he mentioned that he, along with a group of students from St. Mary's Student Parish in Ann Arbor, MI, was planning on making



L to R: Associates
Jake Vanderweide
and Riley Schaff.

the trek to Spain for World Youth Day. In my head, the first word I heard from this conversation was "Spain." "Very cool," I thought. "I've never been to Spain." And so I proceeded to ask Jake about how he got involved with this trip, and if I would be able to check it out to see if it was something I would be willing and able to do. When I was able to get in contact with the trip coordinator at the student parish, he

informed me that someone had just dropped out, and if I were interested I would need to submit paperwork immediately. And so I decided to take a leap of faith: with just a hazy idea of what World Youth Day was, I signed up to go with a group of students unfamiliar to me.

The year leading up to the trip was enlightening for me. I got to know and become friends with some of my fellow pilgrims. I discovered what exactly a pilgrimage to World Youth Day entails, the logistics of the trip and Spanish culture. Before I knew it, the day of the trip was upon me and I was on a plane above the Atlantic Ocean. Arriving in Spain was exhilarating, and I felt incredibly awake and alive despite a significant lack of sleep from traveling. As the first few days went by, I was absolutely floored by the incredible number of people who had made the pilgrimage to Madrid. Prior to the trip, I heard numbers thrown around, like "a million people," but physically seeing a million people was actually quite overwhelming. The strongest growth in my faith occurred by seeing and speaking with many, many people. People from incredibly diverse backgrounds. People from all over the globe, of every skin

color, speaking a myriad of languages. People so incredibly different, but all sharing in one, Catholic, universal faith. Seeing the faith I had grown up with shared by so many people was incredibly powerful, and even gave me goosebumps at times. To be united in prayer, or song, or even sharing one spirit of hopefulness with a million young people from across the globe is something very unique to World Youth Day, and I feel incredibly privileged and moved to have had the opportunity to experience it. World Youth Day was not just about being able to travel to Spain, or see the Pope, or become very close to a group of fellow pilgrims from Ann Arbor, although all these things were very meaningful aspects of the trip. World Youth Day is about experiencing faith through others, and seeing conviction that strengthens your own. World Youth Day is about getting to know other children of God who may be different culturally but are certainly equal in humanity. World Youth Day

is about becoming united with young people who share a vision for a better world and wish to become the future of Catholicism in the world by example.



The St. Mary's Student Parish
Ann Arbor, Michigan
2011 World Youth Day Pilgrimage Group

Pope John Paul II set out to create World Youth Day as an event that unites young Catholics around the world in 1984. With that same spirit, World Youth Day continues to be a powerful, unitive event that shapes the futures of young people worldwide, including me.

Riley Schaff is a graduate of Lumen Christi Catholic High School in Jackson, Michigan and in his third year of undergraduate studies at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor.

Oblates of St. Francis de Sales Toledo-Detroit Province Mission Statement

The mission of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales of the Toledo-Detroit Province is to “Live Jesus” according to Salesian spirituality in our personal and communal lives and to share this spirituality with the People of God.

Bondings

Bondings is published regularly for the members and friends of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, Toledo-Detroit Province. Its purpose is to enhance and develop the bond we have through our common faith in Jesus Christ and Salesian spirituality.

“We have no bond
but the bond of love.”
-St. Francis de Sales

Send all comments and inquiries to:

Bondings
2043 Parkside Boulevard
Toledo, Ohio 43607-1597
419-724-9851
www.oblates.us

Editorial Staff

Fr. Roland Calvert, OSFS

Fr. Tom Helfrich, OSFS

Fr. Shaun Lowery, OSFS

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Live + Jesus

From Provincial to Pastor

by Fr. Roland Calvert, OSFS

Fr. David Whalen, OSFS, served for eight years as Provincial of the Toledo-Detroit Province of the Oblates. He has moved on to become pastor at St. Pius X Parish in Toledo, Ohio.

His work now includes the full spectrum of pastoral duties:

Mass, baptisms, funerals, visiting the sick, and, of course, multiple meetings. The parish also has a school with 265 students. He notes happily that baptisms far outnumber the funerals at this point. Fr. Dave says that he is in the “honeymoon phase” of his p a s t o r a t e and all has gone well so far. He has been joined in community by Fr. John Lehner, OSFS.



Fr. David Whalen, OSFS

Both men teach part-time also at St. Francis de Sales High School.

Dave, like most Oblates, has been involved with parishes in weekend ministry throughout his priesthood. While living in Canada, the Archdiocese of Toronto appointed him administrator of a small Italian parish for ten months. This was in addition to full-time work at a university. “I was young then,” he notes. Dave had to learn enough Italian to say Mass and hear confessions. “I have stories from those ten months to keep me going for many years,” he stated. That experience helped prepare him for his present position.

Speaking of his years as Provincial, Dave said that the most positive memory is sitting down and talking with each man in the province. He came away edified and built up by these conversations. “I was and still am very proud of our men.” The reception of first or final vows also provided emotional memories. Hearing a young Oblate commit himself to the congregation for a lifetime “took my breath away,” he said.

Fr. Whalen spoke with gratitude of the generosity of **Bondings** readers. A letter of appeal is sent out annually. The response, he stated, made the difference all eight years between red and black ink financially for the Oblates. “All I can say is God bless and God love you, and thank you so much for your support!”

Oblate Novices Profess First Vows

by Fr. Shaun Lowery, OSFS

Ryan P. Cronshaw, OSFS, and Robert F. Killion, OSFS, professed their first vows August 13 at Our Mother of Consolation Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Jeff Edmonds, OSFS, and Dave Meiser, OSFS, professed their first vows on August 20 at St. Pius X Church in Toledo, Ohio. Ryan, Bob and Jeff are now in full-time studies in Washington, DC. Dave Meiser is serving as a member of the faculty full-time at St. Francis de Sales High School in Toledo, Ohio. Congratulations to each of you and may God bless you as you continue in basic Oblate formation.



Pictured, left to right, Fr. Jim Greenfield, Wilmington-Philadelphia Provincial, Jeff Edmonds Robert Killion, Ryan Cronshaw, Dave Meiser, Fr. Ken McKenna, Toledo-Detroit Provincial and Bro. Ed Ogden, Director of Formation

What follows is an excerpt of the homily Fr. Dan Lannen, OSFS (Toledo), offered at the Profession Mass on August 20.

“Love is a willingness to put others before ourselves. As we are commanded to love each other, this only comes to life through real and authentic relationships with others. ‘Love isn’t love till you give it away.’ Real love is a decision and a desire to act, not simply a feeling. This continuous desire to love will come to life for each of you in your new Oblate communities. Whether it be in Toledo working in a high school or in Washington D.C. continuing to learn theology, you have been called to love and to give it away.

“This vocation to share the love of God with others through deed and action comes to life in this quote from St. Francis de Sales: *‘Not all are called to do great things for the love of God and neighbor, but we can all do little things each day with greater fidelity and love.’*

“This is truly a wonderful day for both of you as you become Oblates of St. Francis de Sales and I know that you will be good Oblates; but I also know that this is just one day and what happens

tomorrow is just as important as today. These vows of poverty, chastity and obedience will be at times a challenge, but live them, struggle with them, love them. As you know we Oblates have a motto, a simple saying ‘Vive Jésus!’ ‘Live Jesus!’ and yet if you truly think about it there is nothing simple about living Jesus. It is a challenge to the very core and we are all called to this, but you have decided to live Jesus

not on your own but in a true relationship with your brother Oblates who have been here for you and will continue to be here for you because love isn’t love till you give it away.”

A Gathering of “Wild Geese”

by Ron Kotz + Photos courtesy of Bill Albe

They came from Brazil, California, Delaware, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Virginia. They came by plane, train, bus and auto. They came asking themselves, “Why am I doing this?”

They came because two of the legendary characters of Camp de Sales from the sixties, Steve “Cess” Puhl and Bill “Castro” Mittendorf, met again after more than four decades at the site of their former escapades. That meeting inspired Bill to reach out to many of his former confreres. The work culminated in the event at Camp de Sales on September 8 and 9. In all, thirty former and eighteen current Oblates gathered that first day, drawn together by a bond that can never be broken.

We have no bond but the bond of love... Dinner began with a reception catered by Tony Sutton and his wife Kathy at Lawrence Lodge. Later in the evening, many of these men described their feelings of circulating through the crowd, peering into the eyes of

Continued on page 5

Salesian Sayings

“You are quite willing to have a cross, but you want to choose what it will be. I want your cross and mine to be no other than Jesus Christ’s cross, both regarding its kind and the way in which it is laid upon us.” -St. Francis de Sales



If you look closely around your family and friends, you can see many models of faithful discipleship. I encounter them at my parish of St. Perpetua in Lafayette, California, every day. Christ’s cross calls us to the same spirit of selfless, generous, sacrificial service to others in order that we may bring some sense of the joy and hope of the Resurrection into our hurting world. This is especially true when it comes to the challenges that we do not or would not choose: raising a difficult child; dealing with an unanticipated change of job or residence; receiving an unexpected medical diagnosis; working with a troublesome colleague or neighbor; fighting depression; losing a loved one. It isn’t enough for any of us to merely carry the cross. De Sales observed: “The more fully a cross comes from God, the more we ought to love it.” And therein lies the greatest challenge---not merely tolerating, but embracing the cross.

Fr. John Kasper, OSFS, Lafayette, CA

“O my God, grant me the grace to live the life of faith, not to look at people and things in a human way but in a supernatural way so as to communicate God in each action, in every circumstance.”
-St. Léonie Aviat, OSFS, Foundress of the Oblate Sisters



This saying of St. Léonie Aviat invites us to turn to God with faith which helps to supernaturalize our way of seeing people and circumstances as we spend our days in union with God. Each person has good qualities and talents that we need to appreciate.

Sr. Mary Bertha, OSFS, Childs, MD



“O Heart of love, I put all my confidence in you. I fear everything from my own sinfulness and frailty, but I hope for all things from your goodness and bounty.”
-St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, VHM

This is part of a prayer of consecration that St. Margaret Mary wrote to the Sacred Heart. She is the Visitation nun who was granted the extraordinary visions of Jesus in 1673-74 at her monastery in Paray-le-Monial in France. There was initial skepticism about the visions but they were finally endorsed by the universal Church and the Sacred Heart devotion became widespread.

Fr. Roland Calvert, OSFS, Adrian, MI

Send us one or more
Salesian Sayings
and tell us what inspires you about them:
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faces that at first seemed so strange, and the joy of recognition at the sound of a familiar voice, the warmth of a unique smile... and how the years seemed to disappear and they were instantly, briefly, young again and reconnected. Moist eyes twinkled many times that first night.



Richard Eberle shares a moment at the gathering.

Bill Mittendorf interrupted the dinner to give voice to the Spirits of Camp de Sales and Camp Brisson, welcoming former counselors and workers to the first ever X-Oblate Reunion. He recalled the camps as we remembered them: the migration in buses from De Sales Hall and Lewiston in the spring, the rush of activity to ready

the waterfront, paint roadway rocks and cabin shutters, the early morning procession of shadowy figures dressed in cassocks and stiff collars to the Chapel across dew-covered grass and misty hills. He saluted the grand memories of Frs. Shugrue, Earley, Grehl, Fuqua, Stahl, Nessel, Barkenquest, Seelaus, Crowne, McKenna; Doc Sirhal, and Bro. Beetle Bailey. The dinner concluded with the blessing by Fr. Ken McKenna of memorial plaques to honor those who lived in the Scholasticate at Camp de Sales, and to John "Beetle" Bailey for his many years of service. Art Nicoletti, who has lost none of his story-telling skills, spurred all of us to compete in retelling utterly hilarious anecdotes of our lives as we lived them as Oblates.



John Lehner pauses for a photo while interacting with the group.

The second day began with Mass in Sacred Heart Chapel concelebrated by Frs. Andy Dunne and Paul Ruddy. Fr. Dunne's homily, reflecting on Jesus' odd selection of poor fishermen and tax collectors as his disciples, touched many hearts. Later in the morning, Don Zurack led a para-liturgical recitation of selections from the Little Office of the BVM. Don recited the famous lines from Shakespeare's *Henry V* beginning with

"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers..."

Fr. Ken McKenna, assisted by Fr. Jim McHugh, prepared cooked-to-order eggs and omelets for all of us and then led us on a tour of the facilities. Do you doubt the Spirit is stirring the waters of Lake Vineyard still? Well, visit the Novitiate, its two-story annex, and the three hermitages; and listen, as we did in the upper-room, to Fr. Ken describe the process of formation as it now exists for



Bro. "Beetle" Bailey spends time visiting in Lawrence Lodge.

the Oblates. Fr. Ken took on all our questions as he patiently explained the exquisitely conceived and nuanced year of formation. We were amazed at Fr. Ken's candor and his wholesome approach to issues and problems facing the Oblates and the Church today.

For stern as death is love... As the second day went on, many left to begin their trips home. The dozen of us remaining discussed impressions of what we had experienced. These days were witness to healing, love, laughter, and precious memories. At the suggestion that we do this again in two or five years, we were reminded that in the planning of this reunion, two of our brothers were called home: Tom Moran in July and Frank Sullivan in August. Both had planned to be with us. The next reunion will be in the East in 2012.

Its flames a blazing fire... We believe this reunion was no accident, no work of a committee. We recognize the breath of the Spirit and eagerly pass the torch to those from the East to prepare a room for us next year. The web site, xoblates.com, will remain for another year and we are eager to record your story: please download the bio form and send it to ronk905@aol.com. If you wish to volunteer to plan for the next reunion, please contact Bill Mittendorf at mittlaw@live.com. If you know of other ex-Oblates, please contact Frank DeMilde at fdemilde@comcast.net. We pray for our Oblate brothers and for vocations. We celebrate the lives of the "Wild Geese" and the special bond we share *that deep waters cannot quench nor floods sweep away.*





Oblates of St. Francis de Sales

2043 Parkside Boulevard
Toledo, Ohio 43607-1597

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Live + Jesus

Thank You, Madeline!

by Kim Ertle

Dear Madeline,



Madeline
Huntermark

Six years ago you welcomed me into the Oblate family with open arms. You patiently helped me learn the knowledge you had acquired during the past 24 years. During our six years together you have taught me much about life, love, family, and faith. I will miss our lunchtime chats, your listening ear, and your guiding spirit. I will cherish my memories of our time together and they will always bring a

smile to my face and warmth to my heart. I am filled with gratitude for your friendship and joy for you as you retire. I will miss you always.

Love, Kim

Thirty years ago, Madeline Huntermark walked into the offices and the lives of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales of the Toledo-Detroit Province. On September 8, Kim Ertle, provincial administrative assistant, and Beth Savino, office housekeeping, together with members of

Madeline's family and extended Oblate family celebrated her accomplishments and career as an employee and minister of the Toledo-Detroit Province during a party to celebrate her retirement. Former Provincial Fr. David Whalen, OSFS, offered a public tribute to Madeline and Oblates from the Toledo and Jackson regions were in attendance.

During her thirty year career with the Oblates, Madeline provided clerical support to five Provincials and served the clerical needs particularly of Fr. Marty Lukas, OSFS, in his role as Toledo-Detroit Province Vocation Director. "You know everything about us...and you stayed with us!" Fr. Whalen joked in his words honoring Madeline.



Madeline celebrates
with Fr. Marty Lukas, OSFS

One special moment during Madeline's retirement party was the presentation of an original art piece created for her by Oblate Fr. Tom Ribits (Salesian Studios - Buffalo, NY). The artwork includes the signatures and personal notes to Madeline from the majority of the members of the Toledo-Detroit Province. Madeline, we wish you God's blessings!