



Fall 2018

BONDINGS

THE OBLATE MAGAZINE

[V+] | OBLATES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES | TOLEDO-DETROIT PROVINCE



OBLATE ASSEMBLY 2018



HOLD YOUR EYES ON GOD

Summer is a time of meetings. We cover several in this issue: the Toledo-Detroit Province annual meeting; the July gathering of Oblates from around the world in Annecy; the reception of three novices into the Oblate Novitiate; and the ordination of an Oblate bishop. We express our gratitude to the photographers who helped us illustrate these stories: Scholastic Joe Katarsky and Fathers Mike Newman, Barry Strong, John Extejt and Alan Zobler.

August is a time of transition as summer passes into autumn. Students and teachers prepare to return to school. TV networks announce their heavier shows after lighter summer fare. Cooler days replace the “dog days.”

August also gives us the feast (8/12) of St. Jane de Chantal. St. Jane, the co-founder of the Visitation Sisters, gives us good advice for the transition: “Hold your eyes on God and leave the ‘doing’ to God. This is all the ‘doing’ you have to worry about!”

– Editorial Staff

Cover: Toledo-Detroit Province Oblates in the Lumen Christi H.S. Chapel, Jackson, Mich. June 26, 2018.

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. *Bondings* is free of charge to anyone on request. Send your name and address (or that of a friend) to the Provincial Office or call **419.724.9851**.

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2018 TOLEDO-DETROIT PROVINCE ASSEMBLY

Father Roland Calvert, OSFS



The members of the Toledo-Detroit Province gathered at De Sales Center in Brooklyn, Mich., June 25-29. The annual meeting is designed to provide spiritual, educational and social experiences for the participants.

The main speaker was Father Jim Schmitmeyr, a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and an expert on homilies. He has given numerous talks and workshops and has written several books on preaching. He helped us to sharpen our homiletic skills. Fathers Mike Newman and Dave Whalen gave an additional presentation, specifically on Salesian preaching.

On Tuesday, we drove to nearby Lumen Christi H.S. in Jackson, Mich., where Oblates have ministered for a half century. A solemn Mass was offered by Father Dan Lannen who is the last Oblate assigned to the school. In his homily, Father Tom Helfrich provided memories of Lumen and expressed gratitude for all that was accomplished during our time there. At a banquet afterwards, a number of lay speakers spoke glowingly of the Oblate presence. Our ministry at St. Mary's H.S.



Oblates who served at Lumen Christi H.S., Jackson, Mich.

in Stockton, Calif. also came to an end this year. Father Ken McKenna, our Provincial, celebrated this ministry of 48 years in a separate ceremony back at the assembly.

We devoted the last full day to a review of province matters. Father Alan Zobler was celebrant at a Mass of Thanksgiving for our jubilarians (see list on p. 5). In his homily, Father John Extejt spoke of the experience of the jubilarians in going through the disasters of life and “later understanding them as occasions of grace.” What was once thought of as trivial “is later seen as bedrock.” We all need to learn the lessons that life brings.

After a lively and rewarding week, we returned to our communities enlightened and strengthened by our time together.



Father Mike Depcik gives a homily in sign language.



Fathers Lindsay, Graden, McHugh, Kenehan and Eberle.

2018 JUBILARIANS

65 years of Profession – **John Ventresca**

60 years of Profession – **Walter DeSa, Alfred Durant**

50 years of Profession – **James McHugh, Thomas Helfrich**

40 years of Profession – **John Extejt**

50 years of Ordination – **Michael Rejent, Thomas Rieden**

40 years of Ordination – **Thomas Helfrich**



Father Geoff Rose administers the Sacrament of the Sick.



Fathers Zobler, Helfrich, Ribits, Rose and Schwarzkopf.



Our 2018 Oblate Jubilarians.



2018 OBLATE GENERAL CHAPTER



The newly elected Superior General, Father Barry Strong (center), with his two predecessors, Father Aldino Kiesel (l) and Father Lewis Fiorelli (r).

Oblates from around the world gathered in Annecy, France from July 18-25. This group gathers every six years as the term of the Superior General (currently Father Aldino Kiesel) comes to a close. The delegates elected Father Barry Strong of the Wilmington-Philadelphia Province as the new General. They also elected three members to serve on the Council assisting the General.

The first order of business of the chapter was the revision of the current constitutions. Previous work had been done and the chapter completed this process in the first few days. Father Ken McKenna, the Provincial of the Toledo-Detroit Oblates, called this initial work “a great process and a bonding experience.” Other members of our province attending included Oblate Fathers John Extejt, Jack Loughran and Mike Newman.

During the meeting, an American Oblate Scholastic, Joseph McDaniel, renewed his vows along with a French Oblate, Cyprien Messié. They wrote their names in the same book that contained the signature of Blessed Louis Brisson, the co-founder of the Oblates, when he took his first vows.



The Toledo-Detroit delegates relaxing at supper in downtown Annecy.



Two Americans in the VHM Monastery archives at Annecy. Sister Anne-Marie Augustyniak, VHM (originally from Toledo, Ohio) and Sister Mary Francis Metz, VHM (originally from Harrisburg, Pa.).



The chapel that marks the location where De Sales was born. Château de Sales, Thorens-Glières.



Joseph McDaniel signs his name after renewing his vows.



Father Ken McKenna and Father Olivier Fleau, a French Oblate who lived in Toledo, Ohio last year.



AFRICAN OBLATE NAMED BISHOP IN NAMIBIA



Bishop Christiaans with Father Jack Loughran (r) and Father Kees Jongeneelen of the Netherlands (l).



Father Willem Christiaans, OSFS became Bishop Christiaans of the Diocese of Keetmanshoop in May 2018. He was born in Namibia, South Africa in 1961 and took his first vows as an Oblate in 1983. He was ordained a priest in 1988. A century earlier, Blessed Louis Brisson, the co-founder of the Oblates, sent Oblate missionaries to South Africa to serve in this area. There have been other Oblate bishops including an American, Bishop Edward Schlotterback, from 1956 to 1989. We wish God's rich blessings on the ministry of Bishop Christiaans.

THREE NEW OBLATE NOVICES



Front row (l to r): Jonathan Dick, Jimmy Herrigty, Matt Trovato; Back: Father Mike Newman, Novice Director, and Father Lou Fiorelli, Wilmington-Philadelphia Provincial.

Three young men became novices at a ceremony in Sacred Heart Chapel, De Sales Center, in Brooklyn, Mich. on Aug. 4, 2018. Father Lou Fiorelli, the recently elected Provincial of the Wilmington-Philadelphia Oblates, presided.

The new novices are Jonathan Dick, Jimmy Herrigty and Matt Trovato. Jonathan hails from Scranton, Penn. and most recently worked at St. Mary's Parish in Adrian, Mich. Jimmy Herrigty is from Toms River, N.J. and was deeply influenced by an Oblate missionary, Father Bob Hindley, on a service learning trip to South Africa. Matt Trovato, from Bethlehem, Penn., met the Oblates at DeSales University. He is a gifted musician who has enriched many liturgies with his playing.

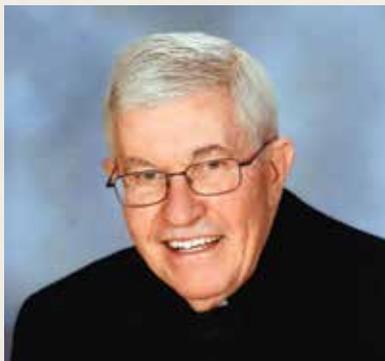
Father Mike Newman will serve as Novice Director and has requested, "Please keep each of these men in your prayers."





FATHER JOHN FALLON, OSFS 1932-2018

Father John P. Fallon, OSFS passed away on April 22, 2018 at O'Connor Woods Nursing Center in Stockton, Calif. at the age of 85. Father Fallon was born in Camden, N.J. He made his first profession as an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales in 1951 and earned a bachelor's degree in English and philosophy from Niagara University in 1957. After completing graduate studies at DeSales School of Theology, Hyattsville, Md., he was ordained to the priesthood in 1960. He later earned a master's degree in guidance from Niagara University (1970) and a master's degree in administration from the University of Notre Dame (1980).



Following ordination, Father Fallon began a long career in Catholic education. After a year at Northeast Catholic High School in Philadelphia, he became assistant principal of Judge Memorial High School, Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1962. Four years later, he moved to Bishop Duffy High School, Niagara Falls, N.Y. and then to St. Mary's High School, Stockton, Calif., as a guidance counselor and teacher. In 1974, he became an administrator at Aquinas High School, Southgate, Mich., and in 1977 was appointed principal of St. Mary's High School, Stockton, Calif. He became president in 1988. After stepping down a few years ago, he remained active at St. Mary's.

Father Fallon will be remembered as a priest, teacher, leader, mentor and friend. St. Mary's High School experienced substantial growth in enrollment, curriculum, facilities, extracurricular activities and spirituality during his tenure. He served on many committees in the diocese and was respected for his practical, sound advice.

In 2014, on the occasion of his retirement, Father Fallon was interviewed by *Bondings* and stated: "I have thoroughly enjoyed my years in Stockton. I've had the good fortune to have an excellent staff who take their responsibilities seriously. Our student body always has been

a great source of pride for me. Time and time again, they have demonstrated their generosity and their caring for others, especially, those less fortunate. Watching these young people grow and mature has been a great source of satisfaction for me personally. The position that St. Mary's holds in this community is unbelievably positive. The community knows that we stand for something and we show it. That in itself is rewarding and makes all that we do here so worthwhile."

Father Mathew Issac, OSFS during a school Mass at St. Mary's spoke about Father John: "Father Fallon was instrumental in getting the Indian Oblates into the Diocese of Stockton and St Mary's High School. I truly believe that Father Fallon was a great Oblate priest, a pillar of Salesian gentle strength. He was very helpful in getting me used to the American way of life. Both Father Fallon and Brother James wholeheartedly accepted me into the St Mary's Oblate community. Father Fallon was a great mentor, counselor and spiritual advisor to me. He taught me how to motivate our students through the homilies. I truly believe that he helped me become a better Oblate priest. I am ever thankful to him.

"I miss his usual question Saturday and Sunday at 12:15 p.m.: 'Brother, what do we have today?' And Brother, as usual: 'Tuna Sandwich.' Bro. James Dorazio and I missed him these last three months in the community. We know that he is with God and watching over us and praying for us. I am truly blessed to have had him as part of our community life and as an Oblate confrere.

"He was truly an icon in this community. I can't tell you how many people he's married, baptized, buried."

He was an incredible person and personal friend. He was one of a kind."

– *Kathy Smith, Principal of St. Mary's H.S.*

"Just his presence and human authenticity changed me. He took time to talk with me. His office was always open for me."

– *Tito Hen, 1994 graduate of St. Mary's*

"You will be missed by the St. Mary's family for all your special talents and contributions in making this institution what it is today. Thank you. May you rest in peace."

– *Michael Moreno, 1973 graduate of St. Mary's*



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