Dear Friends,

As I write to you today, I pray that you and your loved ones are safe and well. Please know that you and all the members of the Jesuits West family are very present in my prayers.

In the six months since our last magazine, so many lives have been upended and so many have suffered. I look back now perhaps a little wistfully at my former self, the early pandemic Scott Santarosa, blissfully unaware of the scope of the devastation that was to come.

Yet, despite the cruelty of this pandemic, God is with us. A friend recently said that she thought that given these hard times, maybe God is on vacation. I told her I have too much evidence to suggest otherwise. Instead, I believe God is laboring for us and with us and inviting us into something new. I feel that invitation palpably.

I feel it when I look at our apostolates and the creative ways Jesuits and our partners in mission are serving — from priests conducting online Masses, to teachers using technology to connect with students learning at home, and so many other innovative solutions.

None of this is easy, and I know that firsthand. On those occasions when I have celebrated a livestream Mass, I have found the format challenging. Absent any feedback (head nod, yawn, laugh or eye roll) you never know if you are truly connecting with people. I know I speak for all my brother Jesuits when I say that we did not enter religious life to shelter in place. Accompaniment is an essential part of our DNA. And with apologies to Zoom, FaceTime, Teams and other options, it is just not the same.

Like all of you, we are doing our best. The unexpected grace of the pandemic is that it is causing us to dig deeply into our relationship with God in a way that is both grounding and humbling. When I see how my brothers have responded to the pandemic, I see God again, laboring in our lives. In addition to finding innovative ways to minister to people, we are caring deeply for one another in our communities, conscious of not doing anything that would put our older or vulnerable Jesuits at risk. Rather than giving up, I am proud to say that the Jesuits of our province are doubling down.

This issue of our magazine is very much about God laboring with us and for us and through us, and the hope that is present and alive in our province as a result. My prayer is that, despite what you may have lost during this time, you can see Christ at work in your own life.

During these difficult days, I return to the refrain of an African American hymn, “We’ve come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord; trusting in his Holy Name, He’s never failed me yet. Oh, oh, oh, we’ve come this far by faith!”

In Christ,

Scott Santarosa, SJ
Provincial, Jesuits West
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Submicroscopic infectious agents, gigantic tropical cyclones and furious sweeping infernos coupled with man-made destruction and senseless killings are wreaking havoc on us, physically, mentally, financially. No one is spared. So, where is hope?

HOPE AND CALAMITIES

In August 2020, after many months of suspended sacrament celebration due to the pandemic, the bishop of the San Jose Diocese reinstated the sacraments. We, priests and catechetical directors of Most Holy Trinity Parish, quickly got ready for the celebrations. All outdoors, we held hundreds of first confessions and dozens of liturgies in which confirmation and First Communion were incorporated. Easier said than done.

My last penitent for first confession was a disabled Vietnamese teenage boy. Just as new as sacraments during a pandemic, hearing the confession of a mute penitent was strange. It was more “reading” than “hearing,” I was told by Sr. Claire. I forgot to ask if he could still hear me or if I would have to write my instructions.

As I was sitting on a bench in the plaza, the young man walked toward me. Typical of a disability marked by Down syndrome, his head and limbs appeared to go in different directions, while his torso moved toward me. I tried to hold back a sigh — both a symptom of my sympathy with him and my own impatience with his uneven, shuffling gait. I knew for sure this confession would take a lot longer than usual, and I had many other things waiting to be done. Just offer it up, I told myself.

He sat down on another bench to keep the social distance. His pointed head was bent at the neck and his face looked serious. I nodded at him and he nodded back. His bent fingers grabbed a smartphone from his shirt pocket and started typing. About five minutes later he showed the screen to me: “In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Father, please forgive me for I have sinned. This is my first confession.” He did it in Vietnamese and the smartphone translated it into English, and both versions showed up on the screen. He knew very little English since he had recently immigrated.

“I said to him in Vietnamese, “Please go ahead.” He paused for a while as if doing his examination of conscience, and then his crooked fingers started typing again. It took several minutes for each of his sins to be composed and presented to me.

His total concentration in typing caught my attention. Hard for the disfigured fingers to hit the right key, but harder was his pondering on the nature of his sins, it seemed to me. Never had I seen a young person take such a careful look at his offense to God and others. I forgot all the things that had been waiting for me and eagerly awaited him to finish his sentence so that I could read it. I nodded as I read each line.

“NO MATTER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, NO MATTER THE LIMITATIONS, IF THE EYES LOOK IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, IF THE EARS PAY ATTENTION TO THE DIVINE WHISPER AND IF THE HEART IS RESTLESS ENOUGH, SOONER OR LATER HOPE SHINES THROUGH AND THROUGH.”

By Fr. Duc Vu, SJ
Father Duc Vu, SJ, celebrates Mass outside during the pandemic.

Regardless of the severity of his disability, both physical and mental, his heart was pure and his sorrow was authentic. I marveled at the ability of the catechists to teach him about human sinfulness and God's mercy. However that had happened, it was what St. Paul reminded us, “Wherever sins abound, grace abounds all the more.” However impenetrable the human limitation, the divine love always pierces through to touch the inner sanctum.

I was sparse with my words, “Are you sorry for your sins?” Instead of nodding, he typed, “I’m truly sorry, father.” As I said the absolution, his eyes opened wide and tears welled up inside, “I am so happy that my sins have been forgiven.” I was wrong. It was a teary smile.

It was I who should be sorry for focusing on the sorrow of sinning rather than the felicity of forgiveness. He typed, “I look forward to receiving my First Communion.” So did I.

The confession I was least looking forward to hearing turned out to be the reading of a sign of hope in the midst of human fragility and calamities. Once the human heart catches a glimpse of hope, nothing else overpowers, but everything has its place in the big picture. Disability and viral disaster have no power over hope.

HOPE SUSTAINED BY SILENCE

The commencement of the pandemic is the end of financial sustainability for most parishes. No people, no income. We priests struggled mightily to offer something we had never even dreamed of doing: livestreaming Mass. Deprived most of what is near and dear — gathering as a community of faith, giving and receiving the Eucharist, singing and eating together — there is one thing I keep reminding my flock of having abundance now: time for prayer and solitude.

Silence, though having nothing to do with revenue or income, has borne fruits in a most unexpected way. It ennobles a generous heart.

For several weeks, my accountant and I anxiously followed the unfolding of a series of mysterious online contributions from a parishioner. In one entry a four-figure gift was identified as “reparation for missed contributions.” Another large transaction said, “make-up giving for past slacking.” Still another entry was “prayer reminded me to give more.” In two weeks, the total donation amounted to nearly two months of Sunday collections! And this parishioner is in her twenties!

The tumult caused by the pandemic cannot drown out the gentle whisper of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a reflective and generous soul. Now and then, silence can help sustain our livelihood if we give it a chance. It can engender hope for the hopeless.

No matter the circumstances, no matter the limitations, if the eyes look in the right direction, if the ears pay attention to the divine whisper and if the heart is restless enough, sooner or later hope shines through and through.

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Father Duc Vu, SJ, is pastor of Most Holy Trinity Church in San Jose, California.
Sheldon Kopp was a psychotherapist and author based in Washington, D.C. He wrote several practical self-help books that caught my attention in the 1980s. The titles of his books were always imaginative and engaging. *Even a Stone Can Be a Teacher* was the title of his book published in 1985. The sub-title was *Learning and Growing from the Experiences of Everyday Life.* The title of Kopp’s book came to mind as I was reflecting on what in the world the COVID-19 pandemic, which we have been experiencing for the past six months, could possibly teach us.

Three gifts that I have discovered during this coronavirus — gifts that are available to all of us — are gratitude, hope and compassion. Each of these is both a gift and a spiritual practice that can help us navigate the storm of this pandemic.

**“THREE GIFTS THAT I HAVE DISCOVERED DURING THIS CORONAVIRUS — GIFTS THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO ALL OF US — ARE GRATITUDE, HOPE AND COMPASSION. EACH OF THESE IS BOTH A GIFT AND A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE THAT CAN HELP US NAVIGATE THE STORM OF THIS PANDEMIC.”**

**GIFT ONE: GRATITUDE**

St. Ignatius of Loyola considered gratitude as the most important virtue and attitude a person could have in life. Gratitude moves a person from being entitled to being blessed. As St. Ignatius once wrote, “Ingratitude is the forgetting of the graces, benefits and blessings received.” I think that is ultimately the greatest harm a pandemic can do to us. Because it is such an unexpected shock to our systems, it makes us forget what is before us in our ordinary everyday lives — a world of blessing and grace.

Bill Spohn, a classmate and friend who died after a long battle with brain cancer, described gratitude this way: “Gratitude is the echo of grace.” Has the pandemic made us deaf to all those echoes of grace in our life?

St. Ignatius, in his Examen prayer, begins by inviting us to look back on our day and remember the blessings of that day — all those “echoes of grace.” You can even begin your day that way. It doesn’t take a great deal of time, but it will transform our living of each day from entitled to deeply grateful.

**GIFT TWO: HOPE**

Hope is the fertilizer of life. Jesuit Walter Burghardt called us all to be men and women of ceaseless hope long before the existence of a pandemic. He reminded us that “Every human act, every Christian act, is an act of hope. But that means you must be men and women of the present, you must live this moment — really live it, not just endure it — because this very moment, for all its imperfection and frustration, because of its imperfection and frustration, is pregnant with all sorts of possibilities, is pregnant with the future, is pregnant with love, is pregnant with Christ.”

Bill Spohn, as he became more aware that death was approaching, wrote to his family and friends: “If gratitude is the echo of grace, then hope is the echo of God’s paying attention to us.” Bill lived and died full of hope because everyday life and approaching death expanded his heart and his vision.
What is key, especially during these days and weeks and months of a pandemic, is to not allow the coronavirus to narrow our vision, to paralyze our hope. Continue to focus on those people and actions that stir hope within you. I think of all those men and women who put their lives at risk to medically help those suffering from this virus. I think of the people I know who reach out to the elderly and isolated to see if they need help and to remind them that they are not alone. I think of all of those who take the recommended precautions seriously (i.e., wearing face masks, practicing social distancing, sheltering in place, etc.) not just to maintain their safety but to ensure ours. All these people fill me with hope.

The more I ponder these men and women who call out hope in me by what they are doing and who they are, the more aware I am that God has not abandoned us in this storm at sea but is with us in the boat. And this, once again, fills me with hope.

GIFT THREE: COMPASSION

The third gift that the current pandemic can offer us or deepen in us is compassion. The great priest and theologian Henri Nouwen was an apostle of compassion throughout his life. He reminds us that “Compassion asks us to go where it hurts, to enter into the places of pain, to share in brokenness, fear, confusion, and anguish. Compassion challenges us to cry out with those in misery, to mourn with those who are lonely, to weep with those in tears. Compassion requires us to be weak with the weak, vulnerable with the vulnerable, and powerless with the powerless. Compassion means full immersion in the condition of being human.” And as we experience the sufferings of others, as Christ did, as Gandhi did, as Nelson Mandela did, and so many others, we remember the words of Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund, “It’s time for greatness — not for greed. It’s a time for idealism — not ideology. It is a time not just for compassionate words, but compassionate action.” This is simply a way of saying that in the face of all this suffering, it is time for love. And St. Ignatius would remind us, “Love expresses itself more in deeds than in words.”

I began this article by asking the question “What can the COVID-19 pandemic teach us?” Hopefully, it can offer us opportunities to ponder how we can be more grateful, more hopeful and more compassionate. While we don’t know the exact date that a vaccine will be developed to combat this virus, researchers and scientists are working diligently to produce one. The pandemic will eventually come to an end. But the acts of gratitude and hope and compassion, that can help us through these challenging days, are spiritual practices for a lifetime.

Father Michael Moynahan, SJ, is senior priest in residence at Saint Ignatius Loyola Parish in Sacramento.
The Role of a Lifetime

By Paul Totah

Father Radmar Jao, SJ, began his new role as director of vocations for Jesuits West on July 31, the feast of St. Ignatius.

In some ways, he has prepared all his life for this lead role, though if you go to his IMDB page, you won’t find it among the more than two dozen parts this talented actor has already played, including characters on Seinfeld and Minority Report.

For Fr. Jao, the two worlds he inhabits — serving as a priest and performing on TV, film and stage — have something in common.

“I’ve always approached acting as more than just memorizing lines,” he said. “My job as an actor is to bring the words of a script to life so that they will impact an audience in some way. Soon after my ordination, it hit me that this is exactly what a priest does. He incarnates the words of the Gospel through his life and his homilies so that the love and mercy of God is revealed to his congregation, whose lives will be changed for the better.”

“MY JOB AS AN ACTOR IS TO BRING THE WORDS OF A SCRIPT TO LIFE SO THAT THEY WILL IMPACT AN AUDIENCE IN SOME WAY. SOON AFTER MY ORDINATION, IT HIT ME THAT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT A PRIEST DOES. HE INCARNATES THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH HIS LIFE AND HIS HOMILIES.”

His appointment to director of vocations by Fr. Provincial Scott Santarosa, SJ, also reflects the growing diversity of the region and of Jesuits West. Fr. Jao’s roots are Filipino, Chinese, Italian and Spanish. This year, the men who entered the Jesuit Novitiate in Culver City, California, are of Latino, Filipino, Vietnamese and Persian heritage. “There’s not one Caucasian among them,” he added. “This is a stark contrast to the makeup of novices decades ago, who were primarily Irish, Italian and German, and it’s quite different from other areas of the country, where novice classes are primarily white.”

While Fr. Jao joined the Jesuits from the vocational melting pot of the Jesuits West Province, he was born in a place that was far less multicultural: Gary, Indiana. After his family immigrated to the Philippines when he was just a baby, his Filipino family helped inspire his life’s two great passions.
“My great-grandmother planted the seeds of my priestly vocation,” he noted. “My earliest memories are of her teaching me to pray in Spanish.” He also saw glimpses of his future when he looked at photos of his mother, Tessie Agana, who was known as the “Shirley Temple of the Philippines,” after acting in movies produced by her uncle at the end of World War II.

He acted for the first time in preschool in the Philippines, performing as Raggedy Andy. After President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in the Philippines in 1972, the family returned to Indiana. At Indiana University, he joined the Singing Hoosiers choral group, where he met a student two years his senior, Ryan Murphy, who went on to create the hit TV show *Glee.*

After graduation, he moved to Los Angeles to pursue work in the entertainment industry. His first professional role was performing the lead character in Berkeley Rep’s production of *Dragonwings,* and he later landed the role of Tobias in *Sweeney Todd* for the East West Players, a part that earned him an Ovation Award — LA’s version of the Tony Award — for best featured actor in a musical.

His claim to fame, however, was playing a Chinese delivery guy on an episode of *Seinfeld.* “The director wanted me to speak with a Chinese accent, but I thought that was ridiculous as many Chinese delivery guys speak perfect English. I asked Jerry if I could dump the accent, and he agreed. That was the first time I stood up against the prejudice and racism that exists in Hollywood. I am grateful to Jerry for encouraging me to be myself.”

While performing in a play in Sacramento, Fr. Jao shared his thoughts about a possible call to the priesthood with a fellow actor who had graduated from Loyola High School of Los Angeles. “He told me not to become a priest, but if I absolutely had to, to at least consider becoming a Jesuit, because you can be a priest and an actor at the same time,” he said.

Before he entered the Jesuit novitiate in 2001, he made a bargain with God. “I said, ‘If you really want me to become a priest, let me work with Steven Spielberg.’ I was set to enter the novitiate in August of that year, and in May my agent called to tell me that I had been cast in *Minority Report,* a film directed by Spielberg and starring Tom Cruise. I hung up and wept in gratitude for the answered prayer. It was amazing to work with Steven, who was friendly and personable and even made a point to learn my name. It was a great moment of affirmation and a sign that God had said, ‘Yes. I really want you.’”

His Jesuit vocation has included serving with a L’Arche Community in Seattle, working at the University of San Francisco on a program that combined performing arts and social justice and parish work at St. Agnes Church in San Francisco.
Two years after ordination, Fr. Jao returned to acting, but he had a hard time finding anyone willing to hire a Catholic priest for a show, “so I kept my priesthood on the down-low and landed some small parts, including a role on *C.S.I.: Las Vegas*, where I played a dead Elvis impersonator. While sitting with the hair and makeup person, we struck up a conversation, and she asked what I did when I wasn’t acting. I told her I was a Jesuit priest. Then she took a deep breath and whispered that she was also a Catholic. I told her that we didn’t have to whisper. We had a great conversation about Pope Francis, and I invited her to attend a Mass I was celebrating at Blessed Sacrament Church in Hollywood. I tried to present to her God’s love and mercy for her right where she was. Being a priest and an actor became a very effective conversation starter with a variety of people during that time.”

Between 2015 and 2019, Fr. Jao worked at the Catholic student center at Boise State University, where he began FirePit Ministry to help young people discern God’s dream for their lives.

In his current job, he does much of the same. This time, however, he leads a team of seven, plus 30 volunteers (see sidebar).

“Each of us on the team has a unique vocation story to share with young men out there who are considering a vocation with the Jesuits. God calls us with our unique gifts to serve the Church and the world in need. I believe our message to those young men is, ‘Imagine what we can do together!’”

**A NEW APPROACH TO VOCATION PROMOTION**

*Father Radmar Jao, SJ, is leading a robust team that includes Fr. Julian Climaco, SJ, a full-time promoter, and six part-time promoters spread out across the various regions of Jesuits West: Fr. Andrew Laguna, SJ; Fr. Francis Nguyen, SJ; Fr. Manh Tran, SJ; Kyle Baker, SJ; Fr. Greg Celio, SJ; and Fr. Matthew Pyrć, SJ. In addition, he has 30 volunteers serving as local vocation contacts for their community and surrounding area, bringing the team total to 38 Jesuits.*

Father Jao and his team inherited a promising list of vocation prospects thanks to the work of their predecessors, Fr. Chris Nguyen, SJ, and Fr. Chanh Nguyen, SJ, vocation director and promoter, respectively, for the past six years.

The team is finding creative ways to engage men in discernment during the pandemic, including an online retreat and a hybrid “Come & See” event that will be held in-person and partly online.

And they hope the vocation work will extend outside the team. All are encouraged to pray for vocations and to ask young men who they think would make a good Jesuit brother or priest: “Has anyone ever told you you’d make a great Jesuit?”

*Father Scott Santarosa, SJ, provincial of Jesuits West, (lower right) meets with the new vocation team during their orientation meeting this past June.*
In Hollywood, they call it a *meet-cute*, the charming first encounter between two protagonists, which sometimes leads to love and, maybe, happily ever after. For Dan Warmenhoven, that meeting took place when he grabbed a middle seat on a flight from Seattle to New York so he could sit next to the lovely girl on the aisle. He recognized Charmaine Andre, a fellow Princeton student, started a conversation and the rest is history. Among the beneficiaries of this fortuitous encounter: the couple’s two children, five grandchildren and countless other young people who have benefitted from their long history of service and philanthropy.

Although flattered that the young engineering student knew her name, Charmaine was not really surprised. “At that time, there were more than 3,000 male students at Princeton and only 96 women. The guys knew each woman on campus,” she recalls.

That post-Christmas flight would mark the couple’s beginning. Eighteen months later, they were married, just days after Charmaine’s 1973 graduation. Dan explains, “I couldn’t let her get away.” The newlyweds settled outside New York City and dove headfirst into busy careers. Dan worked at IBM, while Charmaine earned a master’s degree from Teachers College, Columbia University, and then took a job as a special education teacher in a local public school.

A few years later, when Dan was transferred to Raleigh, North Carolina, Charmaine continued her work in special education, including serving as the director of a program for emotionally disturbed students. Before long, the family grew with the addition of Eric and Laura, and Charmaine gave up her job and stayed home until her youngest was in kindergarten. The busy young mother did not forget the other children who had stolen her heart. An early champion of inclusion, she served for years as a catechist, helping to prepare special needs boys and girls to receive the sacraments.
In 1985, the family headed west. Silicon Valley companies were looking for talented young engineering managers, and Dan was quickly recruited by Hewlett Packard, then hired away by a telecommunications manufacturer before being named CEO of NetApp, Inc., a cloud data services and data management provider.

Charmaine was also being courted. The Diocese of San Jose was looking for someone to help with its special education program, and Charmaine was hired as the director of special ministries. The Diocese hoped to create a more welcoming space for people with disabilities, to incorporate them more fully into Church life. Charmaine embraced her new role, even learning sign language so she could work with deaf parishioners. The diocese could not have made a better hire.

There is one thread that runs through the Warmenhoven’s long, beautiful partnership: the importance of education. Charmaine’s mother was a music teacher, and Dan’s father admired no-nonsense Catholic schooling. When he was just a boy, Dan says his dad “gave me to the nuns” at the local parish school, and later handed him over to the Jesuits.

At McQuaid Jesuit High School in Rochester, New York, Dan found a home. He loved the school’s intellectual rigor, competitive sports programs, structure and discipline. While several Jesuits were role models, he recalls that the lay faculty was perhaps even more influential. “Some were ordained, and some just acted like it.”

Decades later, when it was time for Dan and Charmaine’s two children to go to school, there was no question that the Jesuits would play a role. Eric attended Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose, while Laura went to Boston College. Although Charmaine had worked in Catholic education for years, she came to know the Society of Jesus because of the Jesuits she and Dan met at Bellarmine. “We got to know the priests there so well, and I was always amazed by their spirituality.”

In 2002, Dan was the first non-Jesuit appointed to the Bellarmine Board of Trustees, an event which caused the school’s 150-year-old bylaws to be rewritten. Up until that point, only Jesuits could serve on the board. But the then-provincial was looking for someone with a business background who could focus on keeping financial aid and teachers’ salaries high while maintaining affordable tuition. “We’re not here just to serve the wealthy, and everyone was sensitive to that mission.” says Dan.

After repeated terms on the Bellarmine Board, Dan cycled off, only to be invited to join the board of Cristo Rey San José Jesuit High School, which was founded in 2014 to empower students from underserved communities in San Jose. For eight years, he also served on the board of his alma mater, McQuaid. He loved returning to the school that had played such an important role in his life. And when he and Charmaine were asked to underwrite
the renovation of three floors of a new wing at McQuaid, the Warmenhovens named them for three faculty members — one Jesuit and two lay teachers — who had inspired Dan. They did the same thing when they provided the lead gift for the new student center at Bellarmine — the naming rights were used to honor Jesuits.

After a long career at NetApp, Inc., where he served as CEO and executive chairman, Dan retired from the company in 2014. But his days have never been busier. In addition to Cristo Rey San José, Dan also serves on the boards of the Tech Museum of Innovation, Bechtel, Inc., Palo Alto Networks, and Cohesity. Charmaine is an emeritus trustee at Santa Clara University and an advisor to the school’s Markkula Center for Applied Ethics; director emeritus of Americans for the Arts; board member of the Catholic Foundation of Santa Clara County; past board member of Catholic Relief Services; and an advisor to the Handicapables Program of Catholic Charities.

They have been generous benefactors to Jesuit institutions, including the Jesuits West Province, Bellarmine, Cristo Rey San José, McQuaid Jesuit, Santa Clara University, Boston College and Jesuit Refugee Service.

“I think because of my passion around inclusion, the Jesuits’ focus on social justice just resonates with me. They just don’t talk a good talk; they walk it as well,” says Charmaine.

Dan adds, “All the Jesuits we’ve gotten to know are just incredible people, very talented and very passionate. They could do anything, but they choose to commit their lives to their mission. They’ve contributed so much to our family, and we just feel that we should give back.”

Fifteen years ago, the Warmenhovens established a family foundation that prioritizes support for Catholic education and organizations focusing on health and human services. Dan and Charmaine and their children handpick the organizations that are supported; philanthropy is an important part of the family DNA.

When they are not devoting time to their foundation and their boards, the Warmenhovens love being with their children and grandchildren (lately, in a socially distanced way). Passionate golfers, they have played courses around the world and have a special affinity for St. Andrews in Scotland. Although grounded now, they look forward to taking off again soon. Unsure about when they will be able to travel overseas again, one thing is certain: They will be seated side by side.
STILL “WALKING WITH REFUGEES,” 40 YEARS LATER

By William Bole

Jesuit Refugee Service finds new ways to serve, amid a pandemic and ever-growing numbers of forcibly displaced people

It’s challenging enough to provide an education to refugee children — who, together with their families, are escaping violence and unrest in their homelands. The pandemic has made the task all the more unlikely, especially in remote stretches like the mountains of central Afghanistan, where many have sought refuge from armed conflict elsewhere in the country.

Enter the Jesuits.

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is finding ways to keep up the learning amid lockdowns — often in places without reliable internet or even stable electricity. In those highlands of Afghanistan, for example, JRS is broadcasting daily lessons for refugee children. Teachers are managing to make the lessons interactive by carving out time for children to call in with questions on cell phones.

Bringing Jesuit education to forcibly displaced people is one way the Rome-based ministry is revitalizing its global mission — in the most troubling times since its establishment 40 years ago.

“I don’t think Father Arrupe envisioned us being around four decades later,” says Fr. Tom Smolich, SJ, JRS’s international director. He was speaking of Father Pedro Arrupe, SJ, the beloved Superior General of the Society of Jesus who was serving in that role when refugees began flooding out of Vietnam on rickety boats and rafts in 1979.

The plight of the Vietnamese “boat people” led Father Arrupe to call for a worldwide humanitarian response by Jesuit organizations. Out of that campaign came the founding of JRS in November 1980.
That year, another crisis materialized — the Ethiopian famine, which triggered another humanitarian push by the Jesuits. These were unusual eruptions at the time, and many thought the emergencies would pass, as would the need for such large-scale campaigns. “But here we are,” says Fr. Smolich, “still showing the face of Jesus at a time when there are more and more forcibly displaced people.”

Indeed, the United Nations reports that there were 79.5 million forcibly displaced people at the end of 2019. Their numbers have swelled in the decades since the boat people, largely due to conflicts in places ranging from Syria to South Sudan. And, just as alarming, these people are living through much longer periods of refuge, because the conflicts are not only intense but also protracted. Fewer can return to their homes or find opportunities to permanently resettle.

In light of this reality, JRS is playing a long game. It does provide short-term aid such as food and cash when the situation demands — and the emergency list has lengthened to include soap and hand sanitizer during the coronavirus era. At the same time, the agency has shaped its outreach with the understanding that the displaced are spending years, even decades, uprooted. They need schools, counseling and other help along their journeys. They need what Jesuits call “accompaniment.”

“We walk with them,” says Fr. Smolich, a member of the Jesuits West Province. “We educate them. We help them find their voice, so they could tell their own stories. They get what they need to move forward. And that’s what Jesuit ministry does. It helps people fulfill their hopes and what God intends for them.” He adds, “We listen, because oftentimes there’s a lot of trauma.”

The work is further spelled out in the mission statement: “Inspired by the generous love and example of Jesus Christ, JRS seeks to accompany, serve and advocate the cause of forcibly displaced people, that they may heal, learn and determine their own future.” In connection with this anniversary year, JRS has also articulated four basic priorities and goals, including:

Reconciliation. Diverse teams of JRS workers are teaching children and others from disparate backgrounds how to live together and respect one another. For instance, in regions torn by religious and ethnic violence, Christian and Muslim students have sat alongside each other in JRS classrooms. They’ve learned not only the basics but also lessons from a peace-studies curriculum that teaches about culture, dialogue and mutual understanding. The aim is to foster “right relationships” not only among the forcibly displaced but also between them and their host communities (between the Syrian refugees who have poured into Lebanon and the Lebanese, for example).
Mental health and psychosocial support. Violence and chaos, along with years of displacement, can take a psychological as well as physical toll. For that reason, JRS workers offer an assortment of community-based services to improve psychological well-being. “All of the relief aid in the world won’t necessarily help a child with her trauma,” says Joan Rosenhauer, executive director of Jesuit Refugee Service/USA, explaining why such support has recently emerged as a priority. “And if children are struggling with their mental health, then having good scientific facts in their heads is not going to help them much.”

Education and Livelihoods. JRS is adapting Jesuit education to the world of the displaced. The idea is to nurture hope among both children and adults and help them to develop marketable skills (as teachers, healthcare workers, entrepreneurs, and in other roles such as coders in the global economy). This past summer, JRS schools in Beirut were the first green-lighted by the government to reopen after lockdowns — a tribute to the high esteem for Jesuit education there and elsewhere. During the global health crisis, JRS has pivoted toward a patchwork of options. These include open-air classrooms, lessons broadcast over refugee-camp radio and online learning. Sometimes instructors hand-deliver course materials to the one-room urban apartments of refugee families and teach with the use of cell phones.

Advocacy. JRS advocates policies, practices and legislation that offer protection to forcibly displaced persons — inspired notably by Pope Francis’ passion for this cause. “We continue to lift up the importance of rights established under U.S. and international laws, including the rights of asylum seekers,” says Rosenhauer referring to U.S. policies in recent years that have severely hindered the asylum process as well as refugee resettlement. “It’s more complicated now, during the pandemic, with borders across the world being closed up. But even in a pandemic, you need to find a way to help people in desperate situations. They shouldn’t be sent back to situations that threaten their lives.”

JRS is now at work in 56 countries, serving over 800,000 refugees who have fled their countries and those forcibly displaced within them. As Fr. Smolich says, they have stories to tell.

There’s Patience Mhlanga, who was 11 years old when her family had to flee Zimbabwe after her father was reported to authorities because he voted for an opposition political party. They ended up in a refugee camp in Zambia, where Mhlanga was able to restart her education in a JRS classroom. After five difficult years, the family was resettled in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Mhlanga went on to attend Fairfield University, a Jesuit school, and from there pursued a graduate theology degree at Duke, before going back to Zambia as a Peace Corps volunteer.

Now she’s pursuing a master’s in public health at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. “As a Catholic woman and Jesuit-educated woman, I hope to give back and always remind myself that God has given me a bigger calling in this world,” she says in a testimony circulated by JRS. “I hope to use my education to help others flourish.”

William Bole is a journalist who writes frequently about the Jesuits.

“AS A CATHOLIC WOMAN AND JESUIT-EDUCATED WOMAN, I HOPE TO GIVE BACK AND ALWAYS REMIND MYSELF THAT GOD HAS GIVEN ME A BIGGER CALLING IN THIS WORLD.”

— Patience Mhlanga, Former JRS student in Zambia, now studying for a master’s in public health.
## JESUITS AT WORK IN THE WESTERN U.S.

List below represents the many places where Jesuits are at work not only in Jesuit ministries but in collaboration and partnership with others.

### ALASKA
- Alaska Missions
- Catholic Schools of Fairbanks

### ARIZONA
- Brophy College Preparatory and Loyola Academy
- Creighton University, Health Sciences
- Kino Border Initiative
- St. Francis Xavier Parish and School
- Vatican Observatory Research Group

### CALIFORNIA
- **IRVINE**
  - University of California Newman Center
- **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**
  - Blessed Sacrament Parish and School
  - Casa Kino
  - Christian Life Community, USA Western Region
  - Christus Ministries
  - Dolores Mission Church and School
  - Homeboy Industries
  - Ignatians West
  - Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies, USC
  - Jesuit Restorative Justice Initiative
  - Loyola High School
  - Loyola Institute for Spirituality
  - Loyola Marymount University
  - Loyola Productions
  - Novitiate of the Three Companions
  - Proyecto Pastoral
  - The Center at Blessed Sacrament
  - Thomas Aquinas College
  - Verbum Dei High School
  - Xavier College Preparatory High School
- **SACRAMENTO**
  - Center for Ignatian Spirituality
  - Cristo Rey High School
  - Jesuit High School
  - Jesuit Retreat Center of the Sierra
  - St. Ignatius Loyola Parish and School
- **SAN DIEGO**
  - Casa Kino
  - Ignatian Volunteer Corps
  - Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and
  - Our Lady’s School
  - University of California Newman Center
- **SAN FRANCISCO/OAKLAND/MARIN**
  - Diocese of Oakland Pastoral Ministry
  - Faith in Action
  - Ignatian Companions
  - Ignatian Spiritual Life Center
  - Ignatius Press
  - Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University

### IDAHO
- St. Paul’s Catholic Student Center,
  - Boise State University

### MONTANA
- **ARLEE**
  - Sacred Heart Mission
- **JOCKO**
  - St. John Berchmans Mission

### OREGON
- **PENDELTON**
  - Kateri Ministries and St. Andrew Mission
- **PORTLAND**
  - Ignatian Spirituality Project
  - Jesuit High School
  - Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest
  - JVC Northwest EnCorps
  - Loyola Jesuit Center
  - St. Andrew Nativity School
  - St. Ignatius Parish and School
  - SEEL Portland
- **SEATTLE-TACOMA**
  - Bellarmine Preparatory School
  - Ignatian Spirituality Center
  - Ignatian Spirituality Project
  - Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center
  - Jesuit Restorative Justice Initiative Northwest
  - Rocky Mountain Mission/Northwest (8 missions)
  - Sacred Heart Parish
  - Sacred Story Institute
  - St. Joseph Parish and School
  - St. Leo Parish
  - Seattle Nativity School

### WASHINGTON
- **SEATTLE-TACOMA**
  - Bellarmine Preparatory School
  - Ignatian Spirituality Center
  - Ignatian Spirituality Project
  - Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center
  - Jesuit Restorative Justice Initiative Northwest
  - Rocky Mountain Mission/Northwest (8 missions)
  - Sacred Heart Parish
  - Sacred Story Institute
  - St. Joseph Parish and School
  - St. Leo Parish
  - Seattle Nativity School

**SEEL** stands for **Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life**
Feature Story

JESUITS WEST EMBRACES GIFT OF DIVERSITY

By William Bole

Readers of this magazine have pictures in their minds of Jesuits they’ve encountered — the professor leading a thought-provoking classroom discussion, the preacher turning fresh light on a Gospel story, the spiritual director inviting retreat participants into a deeper understanding of God’s activity in their lives. These are not only scenes from the past. They are recurring every day, all through the Jesuit order. The names and faces are different, though, in some telling ways. The retreat is just as likely to be led by a Fr. Rodriguez, SJ, as by a Fr. Riley, SJ; the mono-colored image of Jesuits in the past is giving way to palettes of black, brown and other hues of the human race. The face of the Jesuits West Province is changing.

The trend is worldwide. Most new Jesuits are hailing from the developing world, with countries like India producing the larger share of vocations.

The shifts are becoming palpable as well closer to home. In the Jesuits West Province, nearly 60 percent of those currently in Formation are nonwhite.

“The spirit is at work. It’s calling these men to join us on our mission,” says Father Scott Santarosa, SJ, Jesuits West provincial. “We have the gift of diversity.” Fr. Santarosa does not leave it at that, because he and others are unraveling a question: “Are we being good stewards of this gift?” It’s a question for the Church as a whole and the wider secular society, but the Jesuits have been putting it squarely to themselves. “Are we truly welcoming our new Jesuits from other cultures and backgrounds? Are we making it possible,” the provincial adds, “for them to use their cultures and their languages in ministering to people? If we’re not using their gifts, then we’re not using well the gifts that the Spirit has given us.”
For Fr. Santarosa, a turning point came in the summer of 2015, when he was attending a national gathering at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles for Jesuits in Formation. Two Jesuits walked up to him and asked, “Can we talk?” They were people of color, concerned that questions about equity and inclusion were getting lost in the discussions. He and other West Coast Jesuit leaders decided to hold a spontaneous gathering of Jesuits from the province, inside the university’s chapel. “It was a very heartfelt conversation,” says Fr. Santarosa, pointing out that the nonwhite members did not always feel welcomed as Jesuits. “I took that gathering in the chapel as our marching orders.”

More recently, as provincial of Jesuits West, Fr. Santarosa launched a formal process of dialogue about diversity and inclusion. In various settings and communities, Jesuits have been reflecting together on questions such as how their identities have been shaped, the things they may take for granted (like the foods they prefer, or the people they socialize with), and their own experiences of inclusion and exclusion (regardless of background).

“It’s hard for people to grapple with questions of identity for the first time or reflect on how they’ve unconsciously acted from a place of privilege. There’s a potential to be defensive, or to get stuck in guilt,” says Lucas Sharma, SJ, who is studying at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in Berkeley, California. Born in Nepal and adopted from an orphanage there by his parents in the United States (his father is also from Nepal and his mother is German-American), Sharma is coordinating the province’s Equity and Inclusion Committee, now in its third year. “The conversations have been difficult and sometimes intense, but they’ve been well received on the whole,” he reports. “We’re learning to be better ministers because we’ve learned to understand ourselves and others better. We’re becoming more inclusive in our ministries.”

What’s clear is that the diversity has arrived, with new Jesuits already bringing their backgrounds and perspectives — who they are — into their ministries and communities. Here are three younger Jesuits finding their way in this new era — and an older one, helping to clear a path for the future.

“The Spirit is at work. It’s calling these men to join us on our mission. We have the gift of diversity.”

— Fr. Scott Santarosa, SJ
FROM THE WEST COAST TO WEST AFRICA
AND BACK AGAIN

On the first Sunday of July, Father Ike Udoh, SJ, is stepping away from the sanctuary of Blessed Sacrament Church in West Hollywood, striding toward his rectory office while taking a call for a Facetime interview for this article. He has just concelebrated a monthly Mass geared to alumni of Jesuit schools and delivered the homily — on the subject of systemic racism. Fr. Udoh likes to use acronyms in his sermons, and the one he offered up on this occasion was WWW, with an inspirational message about how to help break down structures of racism: “Will it, walk it, and work it out.”

Ordained in 2015 at that same church on Sunset Boulevard, Fr. Udoh followed an elongated path to Jesuits West. He was born in Walnut Creek, California, but moved to Nigeria with his immigrant family when he was two years old. He lived there until finishing high school, at which point he returned to Northern California to attend college at UC Berkeley, before joining the Jesuits in 2004.

Blessed Sacrament has “the gift of diversity.” More than half of the parishioners are Spanish-speaking, and there are many Filipinos, some Africans and frequent international visitors drawn to this gem right in the heart of Hollywood. The parish offers Sunday Masses in English and Spanish and liturgies in English, Spanish, Tagalog and French on certain feast days.

As a pastoral minister, Fr. Udoh feels able to “lean into” the diversity, as he puts it. He can speak with Nigerian parishioners in their language and share the culture of his upbringing more generally with other Africans. “You have that affinity,” he says. “You’re in a better position to treasure their experiences and stories.”

But his diverse background has also made him a better priest for all parishioners. “I think my experience of growing up in a different cultural context has given me different ways of seeing the world. All of that impacts me,” he explains, noting that his Jesuit Formation (with stints in Latin America and Asia) also exposed him to other cultural expressions. “I hope I can enter into the situation of people with a little more sensitivity and openness, listen to how God is working in their lives and accompany them along the way.”
I didn’t have the profile to be a Jesuit,” says Fr. Elías Puentes, SJ, parochial vicar at St. Leo’s Parish in Tacoma and the pastoral coordinator at nearby Sacred Heart Parish, which is clustered with St. Leo’s. He had emigrated with his family from a village in western Mexico, arriving in Los Angeles, undocumented, as a teenager. He didn’t come from the middle class — his father was a dishwasher; his mother worked at a meatpacking plant.

Fr. Puentes also didn’t encounter the Jesuits the way many people do, as a student at a prep school or college. He did so as a night clerk at a grocery store near Dolores Mission Church in Los Angeles: One day, he dropped in for Mass and began meeting the Jesuits there. “They became my friends,” he says of the priests, who had “a heart for the Latino community.” They offered him a job as a parish custodian, and he accepted so he could be close to the Jesuits.

Shortly after, he began working at the Dolores Mission homeless shelter. He spent eight years there, eventually becoming director while resuming his education at a community college and discerning his priestly call. He entered the Society of Jesus in 2006, inspired by Dolores Mission Jesuits — their offerings of hospitality, their passion for justice and their openness to other cultures.

Ordained in 2018, Fr. Puentes was assigned to St. Leo’s, a middle- and upper-class predominantly white, progressive parish. He recalls that he initially “felt out of context” culturally and socioeconomically (there was the occasional request for him to speak more slowly because of his light accent). But the intercultural relationships improved. More recently, he’s had the opportunity to minister also at a predominantly Latino parish, Sacred Heart, a few miles away.

While critiquing the sense of privilege he sometimes encounters, he’s aware that as a Jesuit, “I have my own privileges and entitlements.” He has enjoyed the benefits of advanced education and foreign travel, not to mention a level of economic security during a pandemic. Fr. Puentes navigates these and other ambiguities as he advances his ministry to God’s people.
MULTIPLE CIRCLES

Ryan Mak, SJ, isn’t following a particularly well-worn path. He is, for one thing, a Jesuit brother (not on the priestly ordination track). And, whatever the future holds for him, it’s likely to be both ministerial and medical — he’s a third-year student at Loyola University Chicago’s Stritch School of Medicine.

Born and raised in San Francisco, Br. Mak is also the child of immigrant parents: His mother is Filipino, his father Chinese.

“I’m part of multiple circles that are pretty separated from each other,” says Br. Mak, who entered the Jesuits in 2015. He was alluding to his experiences as a Jesuit, a medical student and a person of color with two distinct Asian ancestries, not to mention as a former basketball and football player for St. Ignatius College Prep who now does CrossFit, the high-intensity fitness regimen. He’s bringing all of this background into his ministries.

While in Chicago, Br. Mak has gravitated toward working with Black youth. During the philosophy stage of his Jesuit Formation, he served as a strength and conditioning coach for the football team at Christ the King Jesuit College Prep on Chicago’s West Side. The school uses the Cristo Rey model, blending rigorous academics with work experience for urban students.

During medical school, Br. Mak has taken a similar role with Boxing Out Negativity, a Chicago group that reaches out to young men who might fall prey to gangs and gun violence. The program fosters community and builds character, but there’s the constant fear of losing a kid to the streets: One boxer he worked with was gunned down this past February.

Br. Mak says he has never felt “intentionally excluded” in the Jesuit community. He does at times have to explain he’s a Jesuit to others who suggest that he doesn’t look like one (“I’m dark-skinned and athletic looking,” he notes). The young Jesuit relates that one time, he didn’t have his key to the Jesuit residence in Oak Park, Illinois, and had to get to a spot where the Jesuits keep a spare key. He had two choices. He could climb easily over a short wooden fence near the front, in which case “there would be eyes on me” in the surrounding community, he says, conscious of the race factor. Or he could slip in the back and, less obtrusively, scale a tall fence with electrical wires (for access to a parking garage). He chose the electrical fence.

Though studying and ministering in Chicago, his thoughts are never far from Jesuits West. During a Zoom interview, Br. Mak sported a branded blue T-shirt that says “Jesuits — est. 1540,” custom-made by former gang members at Jesuit-founded Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles.
Fr. Dick Case, SJ, was born into a prosperous family that inhabited a three-story manse in Seattle’s Madison Park section, now home to tech millionaires and billionaires. “I had a silver spoon in my mouth, and I didn’t even know it,” he says. His family was Catholic, but the neighborhood was purebred Protestant. “I never had a sense of being part of the Catholic ghetto,” he recalls. “That sense of privilege was ingrained in me. I didn’t really think of it as an advantage in life.”

Then, one day in the mid-1990s, he was attending a workshop in Berkeley for professionals in the nonprofit sector — and an African American woman told him in all honesty, “You’re a privileged white man.” Fr. Case says it was like a punch in the stomach, and after much agonized reflection, he reached a conclusion.

“She was right. I was privileged. I always expected to have a central place in the operation. I expected to be seen, to be listened to, to be successful and to rise to the top,” says the Jesuit, who had been president of Gonzaga Prep in Spokane and would later become chancellor and vicar general of the Diocese of Fairbanks, Alaska.

His many years in the Alaska missions also turned his thinking. Fr. Case says he went there to give Indigenous people “the answers,” but he wound up believing that his role as a Jesuit was to “accompany them on a journey” toward discerning where God is leading them and their communities.

When asked about growing diversity in Jesuits West, Fr. Case acknowledges that he can’t predict how it’ll ultimately turn out, but he feels that what’s most needed is to “get out of their way.” Let the young Jesuits and lay collaborators blaze their own trails.

“It’s going to be a challenge for all of us,” says the priest, who is assistant superior of Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, the retirement and healthcare facility for the province in Los Gatos, California. “And it’s not going to be easy for them — but they’re moving ahead.”

To witness that forward movement, look no further than the newest members of Jesuits West: All of the men who entered the novitiate this August to begin their long Formation journey are people of color.

William Bole is a journalist who writes frequently about the Jesuits.
At first glance, there is something a bit disconcerting, even jarring, about watching a livestream of an ordination Mass.

Perhaps it is because the contrast between a livestreamed liturgy and an in-person one is so stark. In an ordinary year, the church is overflowing with family members and friends standing shoulder to shoulder, singing, embracing and enthusiastically cheering for the newly ordained. But this is no ordinary year.

The Jesuits West Province was to have celebrated the ordinations of six Jesuits in June at Blessed Sacrament Church in Hollywood, California. This spring, when it became clear that a gathering for upward of 1,000 people would be impossible, that ordination was cancelled. That’s when Father Tony Sholander, SJ, the province’s delegate for Formation, Father Provincial Scott Santarosa, SJ, and others started working furiously on Plan B.

A more complicated scenario, Plan B scoped out five livestreamed ordination liturgies with four ordaining bishops in three Jesuit parishes along the West Coast. After the ordinations of San Mai, SJ, David Romero, SJ, and Perry Petrich, SJ, in Portland,
Frs. Santarosa and Sholander would drive to Sacramento for the ordination of Billy Biegler, SJ, before finishing up their road trip in Los Angeles with the ordination of Justin Claravall, SJ, and Greg Celio, SJ.

Because attendance would be severely curtailed in compliance with local health regulations, the six ordinands would only be able to invite a small number of guests. Everyone would wear a mask, and attendees would be socially distanced. That was the plan, one that went off almost perfectly.

In a conversation before his ordination, San Mai reflected the same sense of acceptance that his fellow ordinands expressed. “We all have been looking forward to this day for many years. Our ordinations are always occasions of great joy. You are surrounded by your Jesuit brothers, who affirm your vocation and lay their hands on you, and so many family members and friends are there to take part in this moment. In the end, though, this is a work of God, and I think the fact that our ordination was cancelled and rescheduled in a much smaller way is, for me, an invitation to let go. My brothers and I are not choosing to be ordained because of the ceremony. We are choosing to be ordained because of God’s love.”

The three ordinations in Portland went off without a hitch. So did the one in Sacramento. As Fr. Santarosa drove south to Los Angeles for the last ordination, he received word that the governor of California had ordered a major reopening rollback, including the suspension of indoor church services. The ordination of Greg Celio and Justin Claravall could not go on as planned.
In the Philippines, Justin’s family held its breath. Prior to the pandemic, 18 members of the extended family had intended to travel to Los Angeles to be present for Justin’s ordination. His aunt, Irma Cecilio, was planning to give Justin a century-old wooden crucifix, one that had belonged to his late grandmother, Belen Lim-Cecilio. Before she died, Justin’s grandmother had prayed that he would become a priest and instructed that the crucifix be given to him. Now Justin’s and Greg’s ordinations were in limbo.

But when one door closes, another opens. The archbishop of Los Angeles said that while indoor Masses were not allowed, outdoor Masses were permitted. Within a matter of hours, Greg and Justin’s ordination was moved to the plaza of Dolores Mission Church, a Jesuit parish serving
“MY BROTHERS AND I ARE NOT CHOOSING TO BE ORDAINED BECAUSE OF THE CEREMONY. WE ARE CHOOSING TO BE ORDAINED BECAUSE OF GOD’S LOVE.”

— Fr. San Mai, SJ

those at the margins in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of East Los Angeles.

“Dolores Mission is a special place where Jesuits get to walk with people who are on the margins of society,” said Fr. Santarosa. “These are the same people who are exceedingly generous because they help teach us who Jesus is and how he rises from difficult circumstances. When Greg and Justin laid prostrate on the plaza, which is basically the living room of the homeless men and women who stay at Dolores Mission, and gave themselves over to God, it was exceedingly meaningful. Once again, those who seemingly have the least came to our rescue.”

Calling the summer’s ordinations a “moment of consolation” during deeply troubling times, Fr. Santarosa said that although he worried that the coronavirus would continue to sideline the province’s final ordination of 2020, he also said that he felt like the Spirit was not going to let this moment pass.

As for Aunt Irma, she’s looking forward to giving the crucifix to her nephew, Fr. Claravall, sometime next year when it is safe to travel. And where will they meet? Dolores Mission, of course, the parish where Justin was missioned long before the pandemic.

It was a busy summer for the Spirit.
MEET OUR 2020 ORDINANDS

Father Thomas William Biegler, SJ
Raised in: Sacramento, CA
Missioned to: St. Ignatius Parish, Portland

Fr. Thomas William (Billy) Biegler, SJ, is from Sacramento, California. A graduate of Jesuit High School in Sacramento, Fr. Biegler earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from the University of San Francisco before working for an opera company in San Francisco and a theater company in Sacramento.

After joining the Jesuits in 2009, he studied philosophy at Saint Louis University and earned a master’s degree in theatre and performance studies at Washington University.

At Jesuit High School in Portland, Oregon, he taught English, Spanish and theology before being missioned to the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, where he earned a Master of Divinity degree while serving at Saint Cecilia Parish in Boston. He currently serves at St. Ignatius Parish in Portland.

Father Gregory Celio, SJ
Raised in: Fullerton, CA
Missioned to: Seattle Preparatory School, Seattle

Fr. Gregory Celio, SJ, was born and raised in Fullerton, California. After earning a bachelor’s degree in history from the University of Notre Dame, he taught high school and earned a master’s degree in education.

He joined the Jesuits in 2009, and after completing the novitiate, studied philosophy, theology and music at Saint Louis University before being missioned for two years to teach and coach at Bellarmine Preparatory School in Tacoma, Washington. Missioned next to Mexico, he learned Spanish and volunteered at a Jesuit work dedicated to lower-income children in Guadalajara.

At Regis College at the University of Toronto, he earned a Master of Divinity degree while serving as a deacon at Parroquia San Juan Bautista. He currently serves as a teacher and campus minister at Seattle Preparatory School while also supporting the province’s vocation promotion efforts.

Father Justin Claravall, SJ
Raised in: Los Angeles, CA
Missioned to: Dolores Mission Parish, Los Angeles

Fr. Justin Claravall, SJ, was born in Los Angeles County to parents who emigrated from the Philippines. After earning a bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara, he did volunteer work while discerning his call to religious life.

In 2009, he entered the Novitiate of the Three Companions in Culver City and then was missioned to Saint Louis University in 2011, where he earned a master’s degree in philosophy. At Bellarmine Preparatory School in Tacoma, Washington, he taught religion and helped with the community service program for two years and then served for one year with the Philippine Jesuit Prison Service in Manila.

Missioned next to the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in Berkeley, California, he earned a Master of Divinity degree while serving as a deacon at the Newman Center at the University of California, Berkeley. He currently serves at Dolores Mission Parish in Los Angeles.
Fr. San Mai, SJ
Raised in: Portland, OR
Missioned to: St. Aloysius Parish, Spokane

Fr. San Mai, SJ, was born in Vietnam but raised in Portland, Oregon. He met the Jesuits at Santa Clara University, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in computer engineering and a master’s degree in business administration.

Prior to joining the Jesuits in 2011, he worked for two decades in the Bay Area as a technology executive. His Jesuit Formation includes philosophy studies at Loyola University Chicago and two years teaching math and science at St. Andrew Nativity School in Portland, Oregon.

At the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in Berkeley, California, he earned a Master of Divinity degree while serving as a deacon and leader of children’s faith formation at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Oakland, California. He currently serves at St. Aloysius Parish in Spokane, Washington.

Fr. Perry Petrich, SJ
Raised in: Tacoma, WA
Missioned to: Jesuit High School, Sacramento

Fr. Perry Petrich, SJ, was born and raised in Tacoma, Washington. He attended Bellarmine Preparatory School in his hometown before earning a bachelor’s degree in theater and theology from Fordham College at Lincoln Center in New York City. After graduation, he led outdoor education trips for Bay Area Catholic grade school students before joining the Jesuits in 2008.

During his Jesuit Formation, he taught theatre to students at Jesuit High School in Portland, Oregon, and to migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.

He holds master’s degrees in Catholic educational leadership from the University of San Francisco and social philosophy from Loyola University Chicago and a Master of Divinity degree from the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in Berkeley, California. Fr. Petrich currently serves as a theology teacher and campus minister at Jesuit High School in Sacramento.

Fr. David Romero, SJ
Raised in: Northridge, CA
Missioned to: Christus Ministries, Los Angeles

Fr. David Romero, SJ, was born and raised in Northridge, California. As a student at Loyola Marymount University, his work in campus ministry and study in El Salvador were influential in his decision to join the Jesuits after his 2009 college graduation.

His Jesuit Formation includes a master’s degree in philosophical resources from Fordham University in the Bronx, New York, service in the Philippines and two years teaching at Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose, California.

At the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, he earned a Master of Divinity degree while serving as a deacon at St. Michael Parish in Bedford, Massachusetts. He currently serves at Christus Ministries in Los Angeles, a Jesuit ministry that works primarily with young adults.
CELEBRATING JESUITS WEST JUBILARIANS

By Becky Sindelar

This year, 49 Jesuits of the province will commemorate special anniversaries. While some are celebrating 70 years in the Society of Jesus, others are marking a quarter century since their ordinations. What they have in common is service over many decades to Jesuit apostolates in the western U.S.

Meet a few of the Jesuits celebrating anniversaries this year.

Father Robert Caro, SJ, is celebrating 50 years since his ordination to the priesthood; 44 of those years have been at Loyola Marymount University (LMU). After receiving a Ph.D. in English literature at the University of Washington, he has served at LMU since 1976, as a professor of English, vice president for Mission and Ministry and professor emeritus of English. He retired from the university in 2017 but has remained in the LMU Jesuit Community, where he assists the rector in overseeing student scholarship programs and administering grants for visiting Jesuit scholars.

Fr. Caro says that like many of his fellow novices in 1959, his path to the Society was through Jesuit education, in his case, Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose and Santa Clara University, where the Jesuits he knew inspired him. He credits a Dominican poet, however, for giving him the final push to join. “In his remarks prior to a poetry reading, Brother Antoninus spoke of the importance for young people growing up, if they are ever to reach mature adulthood, of courageously facing up to decisions that come along that no one else can make for them.”

He also notes that today there is an increased diversity of backgrounds and Formation experiences of younger Jesuits. “We all, nonetheless, share the same sense of companionship with Jesus and commitment to our Ignatian charism.” He adds, “It’s also gratifying that the younger men put up with us ‘old guys’ as well as they do — even when we fail to refrain from telling stories about ‘when I was in Formation!’”

Fr. Caro notes that these trying times are unlike anything else he’s lived through in 84 years. “For those of us committed to the kingdom Jesus came to proclaim, our faith calls us to speak out against these violations of human dignity and to stand with those committed to the struggle for racial equality, economic justice, immigration reform, permanent amnesty for DACA and so many other demands of the common good,” he says.

When reflecting on his life as a Jesuit, Fr. Caro says what he appreciates most is “the ongoing, daily companionship of brothers in the Lord, including many moments of memorable celebration with them.”

Father Cornelius Buckley, SJ, is the quintessential example of a Jesuit who never retires. He just marked 70 years in the Society and is still working as a chaplain at Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula, California. He turns 95 this November — and lives in a student dorm as part of his job.

He says the students keep him busy day and night. “We end the day with night prayers at 11 pm. Then I’m up early in the morning,” though he sometimes squeezes in a nap while the students are at class. As chaplain, he hears confession, celebrates Mass and talks with the students all the time. “I’m very involved with them and they keep me busy.”

Fr. Buckley met the Jesuits at Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose. After graduating, he served in the Navy for two and a half years before attending Santa Clara University, where he earned a degree in philosophy and history.

He joined the Jesuits in 1950 and was ordained in 1962. He then spent several years in France, earning a Bachelor of Sacred Theology and a Ph.D. in history.

After returning to the United States, Fr. Buckley taught at Santa Clara University and was president of St. Ignatius College Preparatory in San Francisco. He then spent 25 years at the University of San Francisco, serving as an assistant dean, dean and history professor. He’s also served as a chaplain at the Mater Dei Foundation in Michigan and at a hospital in California.

He’s clearly enjoyed his work and is happy to still be working in his 90s. “I’m not anxious to retire,” he says.

“Each assignment I’ve gone to, it gets better. Each one has been wonderful,
and I’ve had a very happy and fulfilled life — and I’d like to start it over again,” Fr. Buckley says laughing.

“Each day I grow in gratitude to the Society for giving me the opportunity to know and put into practice God’s will for me and to be of service to others, especially, the students, faculty and staff of Thomas Aquinas College,” he says.

Father Paul Fitterer, SJ, is also celebrating 70 years as a Jesuit. As a freshman at the University of Notre Dame, he was trying to figure out what to do with his life. A priest suggested he take a vocational aptitude test, and one of the vocations that surfaced was priest.

“It just hit me, and I had a sense of rightness about it,” he recalls. His cousin was a Jesuit and was the only priest Fr. Fitterer knew. He also was interested in teaching, so the Society seemed like a good fit.

Fr. Fitterer did end up teaching for much of his Jesuit life, including at Gonzaga Preparatory School in Spokane, Seattle University and Seattle Preparatory School. He also worked in campus ministry and led high school retreats. Retreat work was a blessing for Fr. Fitterer, who wound up doing one-on-one directed retreats with Jesuits for 18 years, work that he loved. “Working with retreatants — adults, kids and college students — and seeing how powerful retreats can be in people’s lives, that’s been a great gift for me,” he says.

He retired to the Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos in 2018, where he prays for the Church and Society and is also active in spirituality groups.

“I’m very grateful for the kind of life I’ve been able to live, the people I’ve been able to meet and the depth of the relationships I’ve been able to have,” Fr. Fitterer says. “That’s part of the gift of being a priest.”

And we are grateful for all the gifts these jubilarians have given to us.
MY QUARANTINE BUDDY, THE MASTER OF SUSPENSE

By Barbara Gunning

As a little girl, I loved watching 1940s classic movies, especially thrillers, viewed on our family’s black and white television. Fast forward decades later and I find that my childhood obsession actually comes in handy given these many months of sheltering in place. Alfred Hitchcock’s films are definitely one of my guilty pleasures.

I don’t know many who would associate “guilty pleasure” with the corpulent British director who died four decades ago. But in a staff meeting recently, our Advancement team was talking about the countless number of political leaders, scientists, inventors, artists, actors and other notables who have been educated by Jesuits. And in that very moment, Hitchcock’s jowly profile popped into my mind.

Hitchcock is part of a long list of extraordinary people who have been educated by Jesuits. I decided that a pandemic was an opportune time to binge watch much of Hitchcock’s oeuvre while learning more about the “Master of Suspense.”

Alfred Hitchcock, who was born in 1899 in East London, said of his upbringing, “Ours was a Catholic family and in England, you see, this in itself is an eccentricity.” Perhaps growing up Catholic in Protestant England gave Hitchcock his first taste of being a voyeur — that artistic sense of being an observer of life.

In 1910, he was sent to St. Ignatius College, a Jesuit grammar school for boys in London. Reflecting on his time there, Hitchcock said that the Jesuits gave him “a consciousness of good and evil, that both are always with me.” He left St. Ignatius to study advertising design and art and later became involved with the burgeoning film business. Before long, he was writing screenplays and directing.

While working as the art director on a silent film, he met his future wife, Alma, a screenwriter and editor, who would remain his lifelong collaborator. When they decided to marry, Hitchcock’s mother insisted that Alma convert to Catholicism. Perhaps Hitchcock’s strong mother was the role model for many other steely mothers in his films, such as the one in Notorious who slowly poisons her son’s wife.

After receiving international recognition for British thrillers, Hitchcock was persuaded by David Selznick to move to Hollywood in 1939 to direct Rebecca. This began the period of his greatest artistic achievement as he directed Notorious, Rear Window, North by Northwest, Vertigo and Psycho over the next 15 years.

Hitchcock famously said, “Revenge is sweet and not fattening,” and in a Hitchcock film, evil is very personal. The murderer might be your husband, your uncle, your neighbor, an old college chum and even a bird in a school yard. The Catholic doctrine of “original sin” is everywhere, and even Hitchcock’s heroes have their flaws, as evidenced by Jimmy Stewart’s Scotty in Vertigo who has no compunction about developing an obsessive attachment to the wife of a friend. It is a credit to Hitchcock’s genius that we find ourselves rooting for Scotty anyway.

Hitchcock once said, “I don’t think that I can be labeled a Catholic artist, but it may be that one’s early upbringing influences a man’s life and guides his instinct.” Perhaps that’s why he always brings out the humanity in his murderers. They are charming, articulate, witty, attractive and perhaps the tiniest bit justified. Nothing is ever completely black and white. Hitchcock knows that to be human is to sin, but he also recognizes mankind’s need for redemption, truth and justice.

Although the Hitchcocks were parishioners at Good Shepherd Church in Beverly Hills, it is rumored that the great director became estranged from the Catholic faith in later years. But in a 2012 article, Fr. Mark Henninger, SJ, recounted that he visited Hitchcock often and said Mass for him at his home in Bel Air. Shortly before Hitchcock’s death, Fr. Henninger witnessed Hitchcock’s tears when he received Holy Communion. It has often been said of the Jesuits: “Give me a child until he is 7, and I’ll give you the man.” In the case of Alfred Hitchcock, the influence of the Jesuits lasted a lifetime.

Barbara Gunning is the Jesuits West Province’s Regional Director of Advancement for Southern California and Arizona.
APPOINTMENTS

Father Joseph G. Mueller, SJ, became the new dean of the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in July. He previously served as the rector of Marquette University’s Jesuit Community.

Fr. Mueller taught at Marquette for more than 20 years, after a year as a philosophy instructor at Boston College. He spent a semester as a visiting professor at the Institute of Theology of the Society of Jesus in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

He was previously associate dean for academic affairs in Marquette’s Helen Way Klingler College of Arts and Sciences and served as director of graduate studies and assistant chairman for the Department of Theology. He also served for seven years for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ.

Father Edward (Eddie) Siebert, SJ, became rector of the Loyola Marymount University (LMU) Jesuit Community on July 31, succeeding Father Allan Deck, SJ.

Before his appointment as rector, Fr. Siebert already had several roles at LMU. He is on the part-time faculty of the School of Film and Television, works part-time with campus ministry and lives as a resident minister on campus. He is also the chaplain for the student worker program and primary caretaker for Buster, LMU’s therapy dog.

Fr. Siebert is the founder of Loyola Productions, a non-profit film, video and multimedia production company in Los Angeles, where he has served as president since 2000. He previously worked on the ABC/20 Century Fox television show “Nothing Sacred.”

Father Michael Engh, SJ, was appointed chancellor of Loyola Marymount University, effective October 1. He previously served at LMU for 20 years, from 1988-2008.

As dean of LMU’s Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts, Fr. Engh promoted an ambitious initiative in inter-religious dialogue by establishing the Huffington Ecumenical Institute, the Doshi Professorship in Indic Religions and the Jewish Studies Program.

Fr. Engh then served as the 28th president of Santa Clara University from 2009 to 2019. Among his achievements, he expanded academic offerings and transformed the size, diversity and caliber of the student body by growing the number of applicants by 60 percent and simultaneously improving the graduation rate by nearly 10 percent.

Father Dorian Llywelyn, SJ, has been appointed as the second president of the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies at the University of Southern California. Fr. Llywelyn, who previously served as the executive director of the Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education at Santa Clara University, began his new duties at the end of July.

At Santa Clara’s Ignatian Center, which he joined in 2016, Fr. Llywelyn led a strategic planning process, strengthened its board, built its endowment and hosted innovative interdisciplinary projects.

Before his appointment at Santa Clara, Fr. Llywelyn taught systematic theology at Heythrop College at the University of London and served for 13 years in the department of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University.

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY NAMES FIRST LAY PRESIDENT

Eduardo M. Peñalver, the dean of Cornell University’s Law School, a Rhodes Scholar and a professor of law who clerked for former U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens, has been named the next president of Seattle University.

He will become the university’s 22nd president, its first Latino president and the first layperson to take the helm since Seattle University was founded in 1891. Peñalver will begin his official duties on July 1, 2021.

President Father Stephen Sundborg, SJ, previously announced he will step down in June after 24 years leading the university.

Peñalver grew up in Puyallup, Washington, and received his primary education at his parish school, All Saints, before attending Henry Foss High School in Tacoma. His parents and four siblings all live in Puyallup and Tacoma.

He became the first Latino dean of an Ivy League law school when he was appointed to his current role in 2014. He received his bachelor’s from Cornell in 1994 and his law degree from Yale Law School in 1999.

Peñalver said the presidency presents a unique opportunity to help guide the university during challenging times to even higher levels of achievement and impact.

“I am so grateful to join Seattle University, excited about its future and looking forward to working with all of the faculty, staff, students and alumni of Seattle University to bring that future into being,” Peñalver said.
NEWS continued

HOMEBOY INDUSTRIES AWARDED THE 2020 CONRAD N. HILTON HUMANITARIAN PRIZE

Homeboy Industries has been selected as the recipient of the 2020 Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize and will receive a $2.5 million dollar award. Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ, founder and executive director of Homeboy Industries, the largest gang rehabilitation and re-entry program in the world, said, “All of us at Homeboy Industries are profoundly humbled by the Hilton Foundation’s recognition. Their validation of our work of 32 years strengthens our resolve to create a community of kinship and healing in Los Angeles. This acknowledgment helps us all to move past ‘survival of the fittest’ and allow the thriving of the nurtured.”

The Hilton Prize is the world’s largest annual award presented to a nonprofit organization judged to have made extraordinary contributions toward alleviating human suffering.

Peter Laugharn, president and CEO of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, said that Homeboy is “a tremendous example of ground-breaking humanitarian work right here in Los Angeles, its community-led approach has spawned and supported a global network of over 300 organizations. Homeboy Industries embodies the spirit of the Prize and the work of the Foundation — focusing on equity, resilience and dignity — in an inspiring way.”

Homeboy Industries plans to use the prize money to expand its mission, which will include constructing a new supportive housing facility, creating new social enterprises and launching a juvenile re-entry center.

TWO JESUITS WEST HIGH SCHOOLS RECEIVE TRANSFORMATIONAL GIFTS

Two Jesuits West high schools — Cristo Rey San José Jesuit High School and Loyola High School of Los Angeles — recently received historic gifts.

Real estate investment firm founder and philanthropist George Marcus and his wife, Judy, have given $10 million to establish an endowment for Cristo Rey San José Jesuit High School — the single largest donation received by the school.

The investment returns from the endowment will underwrite half the annual education cost for 75 of Cristo Rey’s 462 students. Additionally, Cristo Rey will name The Judy and George Marcus Center for Student Success in the office of Guidance and Counseling. The Marcuses’ have been supporters of Cristo Rey since 2014.

Opened in 2013, Cristo Rey San José was established solely for students from underserved communities in East San José.

Loyola High School of Los Angeles, recently announced that Loyola Board Chair, business innovator, civic leader and philanthropist Rick J. Caruso and his wife Tina are donating $5 million to the school, earmarking $4.5 million for the 1901 Venice Boulevard Project and $500,000 for the Caruso Scholar endowment.

This transformational gift is the largest single gift that Loyola has received for the 1901 Venice Boulevard Project. In addition, the gift will fully endow a four-year scholarship for a high-performing, low-income student from an underserved Los Angeles neighborhood.

The 1901 Venice Boulevard Project includes the building of Caruso Hall, formerly known as Xavier Center, from the ground up. It will include a dedicated sacristy for school liturgies, state-of-the-art integrated communications and AV equipment, a full-service banquet kitchen, a multi-purpose student kitchen, and ADA-compliant restrooms.

SUPPORT JESUITS WEST THROUGH PLANNED GIVING

For information about designating Jesuits West in your estate plan, please contact Fr. Samuel Bellino, SJ, at (408) 884-1639 or sbellino@jesuits.org.
A little more than a year ago, the provincial of Jesuits West, Father Scott Santarosa, SJ, asked a gathering of province leaders to imagine what they could accomplish by galvanizing their voices in support of our brothers and sisters at the margins. He said, “Are there enough injustices against the people we love to consider flexing our Jesuit muscle again and regularly? Are we offering to the Beloved all the gifts we are truly in possession of? Can we also offer our power?”

The response to that call to action has been formidable. Hundreds of people from Jesuit and lay leaders of apostolates to parishioners, faculty, students, parents and many others — have joined forces this year to walk with the excluded in a mission of reconciliation and justice.

The movement officially got underway in January at a three-day training at El Retiro, the Jesuit Retreat Center of Los Altos, California, to prepare delegates — selected by their respective ministries — to participate in the Faith Doing Justice Discernment Series. From January through May, delegates and other discerners met in 12 separate regions of the province to discuss where the Spirit was moving and how ministries might envision working together on a common goal.

In May, well before the closing retreat of the discernment series, Jesuit ministries in the state of Washington organized Open Wide All Hearts, an online prayer vigil on behalf of undocumented people in Washington who were not included in COVID-19 relief legislation. Among the 500 participants in the bilingual (English and Spanish) event were several elected officials. It was to be the first of what has become thousands of actions for equity.

When the discernment series concluded at an online retreat in June, attendees were asked to consider the fruits of their many months of prayerful discussion and sharing. According to Annie Fox, provincial assistant for social ministry organizing for Jesuits West, each region felt strongly called to move forward on a program for racial equity. She said, “I think it’s easy for people to point to the events of the summer and believe that was the impetus, and while that certainly was very much on our minds and in our hearts, race was central from the beginning of the process and there was always tremendous energy around the issue.”

The busy summer also saw the creation of the Ignite program, a five-day training for young adults in faith-based community organizing that was spearheaded by teachers at many of the province’s secondary schools. Approximately 20 student fellows, who were trained this summer, are helping to lead actions of equity across the province.

This fall, because of the importance of election integrity as a core value of racial justice, Jesuit ministries in the province have been focusing their attention on voter education and registration efforts. Jesuits West ministries are holding bilingual online voter education events, volunteering at phone banks and mailing postcards to people who have been kicked off voter rolls.

Some of the advocacy is directly linked to those who are suffering as a result of the pandemic. Recently, more than 50 Jesuits co-signed a letter to California Governor Gavin Newsom calling for legislative protection for thousands of laid-off hospitality workers in the state. The letter, hand delivered to the governor’s office by Father John McGarry, SJ, the president of Jesuit High School of Sacramento, was written to “honor the often invisible labor of those who clean and care for our public spaces.”

Noting that the virus has disproportionately affected the poor, people of color and immigrants, the letter said that the economic fallout has devastated low-wage housekeepers, janitors, cooks and dishwashers. “There will be no justice in our recovery without recognizing the contribution of people who willingly show up and risk their own safety to serve in menial jobs that are often overlooked by all of us.”

Several months ago, the province challenged its ministries to log 10,000 actions for equity by the end of the year. By mid-October, that goal was shattered, and new actions are being added on a daily basis. When advocating for justice, every conversation, every letter and every phone call counts. To learn more and join the movement, visit jesuitwestcore.org.
Fr. Patrick J. Cahalan, SJ, longtime president of Loyola High School of Los Angeles, died February 14, 2020, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California, at age 88. Born in Los Angeles, he graduated from Loyola High School and Loyola University of Los Angeles and then accepted an Air Force ROTC commission, serving as an intelligence officer for two years. After leaving the service, he studied at Loyola University Law School. He became an emeritus professor in 2009, remaining in close contact with faculty, students and alumni. In 2019, he moved to Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, where he continued to research and give talks to the community. His priestly ministry included presiding at the marriages, baptisms and funerals for many alumni, as well as chaplaincy to prisoners in the county jail.

Fr. Paul J. Goda, SJ, emeritus professor of law at Santa Clara University, died January 29, 2020, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California, at age 88. Born in Los Angeles, he graduated from Loyola High School and Loyola University of Los Angeles and then accepted an Air Force ROTC commission, serving as an intelligence officer for two years. After leaving the service, he studied at Loyola University Law School. He became an emeritus professor in 2009, remaining in close contact with faculty, students and alumni. In 2019, he moved to Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, where he continued to research and give talks to the community. His priestly ministry included presiding at the marriages, baptisms and funerals for many alumni, as well as chaplaincy to prisoners in the county jail.
Fr. Richard H. Brown, SJ, longtime pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in San Diego, died May 20, 2020, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California. He was 93 years old. After graduating high school in 1944, he studied at the California Maritime Academy in Vallejo as a member of the Navy Reserve. A severe illness led him to change his life’s direction, and he joined the Jesuits in 1946 and was ordained a priest in 1958. Affectionately known as “Brownie,” to many and “El Padrecito del Barrio,” to others, he served at Our Lady of Guadalupe for decades as associate pastor, pastor and senior priest. In addition to sacramental ministry, baptizing thousands of babies, witnessing marriages, conducting funerals, counseling gang members and blessing motorcycles and lowriders, he was active in the parish school. He worked with various civic and church organizations in the barrio to keep his young parishioners out of gangs. He moved to the Jesuit healthcare facility in 2018 and, even in retirement, kept in close contact with his former parishioners.

Fr. Thomas W. Franxman, SJ, retired professor of Scripture and Semitic languages, died May 24, 2020, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California. He was 87 years old and would have celebrated his 70th anniversary as a Jesuit later this year. He attended St. Ignatius High School in San Francisco and then entered the Jesuits in 1950. He earned degrees at Gonzaga University and Alma College of Santa Clara University before being ordained a priest in 1964. After completing a year of studies in Austria, Fr. Franxman did graduate studies at Oxford University, earning a Ph.D. in Semitic Languages in 1975. He served on the faculty of Ancient Oriental Studies at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome from 1970 to 1986. He then taught languages and Scripture at Heythrop College of the University of London (1986-1990), the Pacific Regional Seminary in Fiji (1991-1996) and Loyola School of Theology in Manila (1997-2001). Returning to the United States, he did research at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City (2001-2007) and Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati (2007-2012). In 2012, he retired to a ministry of prayer at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, where he had begun his Jesuit training.

Fr. R. Daniel Kendall, SJ, longtime professor at the University of San Francisco (USF), died May 26, 2020, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California, at age 81. Born in Miami, Arizona, he attended St. Francis Xavier elementary school and Brophy College Preparatory before joining the novitiate in 1957. During his Jesuit formation he received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees and a Master of Divinity. He was ordained in 1970 and then went to Rome for further studies. He earned a Licentiate in Sacred Scripture at the Pontifical Biblical Institute (1973) and a Doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Gregorian University (1975) where he was the first doctoral student of Gerald O’Collins, SJ, with whom he developed a lifelong friendship. The two Jesuits authored 10 books together. Fr. Kendall taught theology at Gonzaga University from 1975 to 1979 and was then missioned to USF where he served several terms as chair of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies. He also taught abroad in China, Macao, India and the Philippines and served as the book review editor for Theological Studies for 10 years. He retired in May 2020 after 41 years of service at USF.

Fr. Thomas M. McCarthy, SJ, teacher, pastor and Jesuit administrator in the Pacific Northwest, died August 1, 2020, in San Jose, California. He was 89 years old and a Jesuit for 70 years. After graduating high school, he joined the Jesuits in 1949 and was ordained in 1962. He then served at Bellarmine Preparatory School in Tacoma, Washington, as spiritual director and senior religion counselor. He later taught at Jesuit High School in Portland, Oregon, and in the Continuing Religious Education Program at Gonzaga University. Fr. McCarthy also served in administrative posts for the Jesuits’ Oregon Province, including as Provincial Assistant for Pastoral Ministry. He then served as pastor in two parishes in Oregon: Holy Redeemer Church in La Pine (1990-93) and St. Francis Church in Sherwood (1993-2012). At St. Francis, he was a beloved pastor, who built the parish school and served the community well. In his later years in Portland, Fr. McCarthy served as a pastoral minister visiting the sick and administering the sacraments to the homebound. When he could no longer drive, a quick call to Uber would get him to where he needed to go.

Fr. Paul G. Crowley, SJ, longtime professor of Religious Studies at Santa Clara University, died August 7, 2020, in Redwood City, California, at age 68, after a battle with cancer. He received a bachelor’s from Stanford University in 1973 and earned a master’s in the philosophy of religion at Columbia University/Union Theological Seminary in New York in 1975. He then earned his doctorate in theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, in 1984, before joining the Jesuits in 1986. He was ordained a priest in 1992 and then taught at Santa Clara University until 2001. After a two-year appointment as visiting professor at the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he returned to Santa Clara, where he taught until his retirement earlier this year. Fr. Crowley also served as department chair at Santa Clara, and he was an active member of the Catholic Theological Society of America. From 2016 to 2019, he served as editor of Theological Studies, a prestigious Catholic scholarly journal. He was influential in developing the careers of many younger theologians.

Fr. Robert L. Fitts, SJ, a pastor and hospital chaplain in many cities in the Pacific Northwest, died August 9, 2020, at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California. He was 91 years old and a Jesuit for almost 63 years. Born in Sunnyside, Washington, he joined the U.S. Navy after graduating high school. On the G.I. Bill, Fr. Fitts attended Seattle University, where he earned his bachelor’s degree and first considered a Jesuit vocation. He joined the Jesuits in 1957 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1969. He then began a decades-long ministry as hospital chaplain (31 years), parish priest (17), retreat director and administrator in the Pacific Northwest, including in Portland, Oregon; Spokane, Washington; and Anchorage, Alaska. Fr. Fitts also served at Saint Louis University Hospital and as the Alaska area director for the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. “Fitts the Friendly” made an impact on all those he served, whether hospital patients and staff, parishioners or his fellow Jesuits. He retired from active work in 2011 and was engaged in a ministry of prayer.
I would not admit to humming Willie Nelson’s “On the Road Again,” but when I was blazing a trail north on I-5 recently, that song was on my mind. After seven months of sheltering in place, I was headed from my home in the Bay Area to Seattle to do something I love: meet with people who care deeply about the Jesuits and their mission. I was looking forward to my first out of town donor meetings since March, and despite the 12-hour car ride, I was a bit giddy.

No matter how lucky your circumstance during this pandemic (and I have been inordinately blessed), it is hard not to be dispirited. There is something about returning to what was once an everyday activity that grounds you and gives you hope. For me, the trip to Seattle to accompany our provincial on visits with people who have supported Jesuits West was like finding a well after stumbling around the desert for months.

I love meeting donors, hearing about their families and learning how they first came to know the Jesuits. Whether our donors met the Jesuits as students, parishioners or parents, recently or decades ago, I am amazed at how generous people are when it comes to supporting our province. At its core, the province forms new Jesuit priests and brothers; then, it cares for those Jesuits in their later years. The boundless respect that I feel for our Jesuits is only magnified when I meet others who share that same feeling.

While my meetings in Seattle and, later Bozeman, Montana, were conducted using every available safety protocol, the masks and social distancing did not diminish the pure pleasure of being with people. We all have stories about Jesuits we know and love, and hearing others talk about the Jesuits who have been influential in their own lives is powerful for me.

Once, years ago, there was a donor who told me that the community at Loyola High School came to his family’s aid after his father’s sudden death. The Jesuits saw great promise in the young man but knew that his newly single mother would not be capable of making his dream come true of attending “The High.” Decades later, the fidelity expressed by those Jesuits is being repaid tenfold by the boy who grew up to achieve great things, just as the Loyola High Jesuits predicted.

There are so many stories like that. The word used to describe the Jesuit program of academic study and training for ministry for would-be priests and brothers is called Formation. In a sense, though, all of us who love the Jesuits have been formed by them as well.

Because so many have asked, I want to let you know that the Jesuits at our retirement/healthcare facility, Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, are all doing well, and we thank God for that. Because of COVID protocols, they cannot have visitors now, and they miss seeing the many friends like you who would regularly stop by. Please continue to keep them in your prayers and rest assured that you are remembered in their prayers as well.

With gratitude,

Siobhán Lawlor
Vice President for Advancement & Provincial Assistant
A FRUITFUL LEGACY

Although the pandemic has caused soaring sales of cleaning products and face masks, among other household items, wine is also having a moment. At Jesuits West, we can’t think about wine without fondly remembering the winery that was built by the hard labor of Jesuit priests, brothers and grape-picking novices.

Each fall from 1888 until 1978, Jesuit novices at Sacred Heart Novitiate in Los Gatos, California, spent over a month picking grapes on the steep hillsides surrounding the novitiate. The grapes were made into sacramental wine, and the sales supported the novitiate program. Although Novitiate Winery closed in 1986, the historic buildings are still in use, leased to Testarossa Winery.

Today, the former novitiate houses Sacred Heart Jesuit Center (SHJC), the province’s healthcare/retirement facility. The Jesuits who live at SHJC, many in their 80s and 90s, can look out their windows and see the now-fallow fields where they once picked grapes. We raise a glass to them and to all those who have labored in the vineyard of the Lord.

Photos courtesy of the digital collection of the former California Province
2020 FIRST VOWS

Five Jesuits West novices pronounced first vows on August 8 in the Chapel of St. Ignatius at the Jesuit Novitiate of the Three Companions, Culver City, California: Alexander Phan, SJ, Brett Heibling, SJ, Travis Neuman, SJ, Nicholas Russell, SJ, and Collin Price, SJ