



BROTHERHOOD of HOPE®

PRIMUM DEUS • DEUS SOLUM

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2013



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CELEBRATIVE



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BY FR. PETER CEBULKA, CO

On July 16, 2001, the Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the members of the fledgling New Brunswick Congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, experienced their first day on the job as campus ministers at the Catholic Center at Rutgers University. If you told us a year earlier our first corporate apostolate would be ministering to college students at a secular university we would have likely scoffed at the idea. However, the Holy Spirit, being a Master of surprise, had a different idea and campus ministry at Rutgers became ours.

With the exception of one of our confreres, none of us had experience in campus ministry and the priest who did had only been at Rutgers for the previous year. Hiring a young lay woman, an RU alum who had just finished her Masters in Pastoral Ministry, the rookies showed up to work and immediately celebrated Mass for our Lady's feast day seeking her guidance and intercession: we knew we were going to need it!

Our immediate goal was to bring consistency and unity to the ministry. There were many small groups of various types but no overall sense of being one community of faith. Raising

the quality of the liturgical experience and bringing a unity of celebration to all the Sunday campus Masses --- six at the time --- was a high priority. We started semester retreats from the beginning and in our first years were excited when we finally reached the high 20s in terms of the number of retreatants.

Somewhere in my fourth year I received a phone call from Br. Rahl Bunsä. With that phone call the Holy Spirit was about to take campus ministry at RU to an entirely new level. For the past twelve years I have had the great privilege and grace to witness this ministry grow from its initial tentative steps to a thriving and dynamic college outreach. Evangelization has become a rallying cry and our retreats now

number 150 or more.

"We share a common vision of evangelization, a deep love for the Church and its liturgy, happiness in our vocations and a heartfelt zeal for bringing young people to the Lord."

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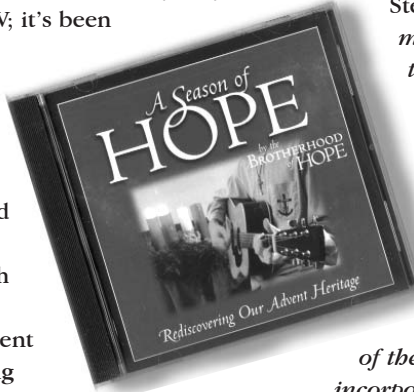


A R O U N D T H E B R O T H E R H O O D



NICE NOTES FROM YOU!

It was ten years ago that our musically talented brothers recorded our first musical CD, *A Season of Hope – Rediscovering Our Advent Heritage*. Some results? It's been featured on EWTN and yearly on Catholic TV; it's been aired on over 130 radio stations including BBC; and it's been endorsed by nationally known Church leaders. Also, many of you sent us encouraging notes with snippets like these: "My four sons love it too!" – Deb. "It's like a portable retreat" – Chris. "What a great way to start my day" – Diane. "It's absolutely impressive and inspirational" – Fr. Mike. "I play it whenever I need support in the spiritual battle" – Charlie. "Thanks for the Advent kick-start!" – Sheila. ... Visit our website for more info, and God bless your upcoming Advent season.



from St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, MN. Like the many brothers in our community who also have these credentials, these brothers have engaged in studies part-time while continuing to minister. Br. Stephen said, "After many years of serving the Church it was a blessing and spiritually refreshing to take time to systematically study aspects of the faith and pastoral ministry ... I have already seen the benefits of these studies and have incorporated much of them into the ministry."

FIRST MASS ON THE HILL

With the permission of Cardinal O'Malley, our brothers who now reside on Mission Hill and serve on the HUB campuses now reserve the Eucharistic presence of the Lord Jesus in their household chapel. All of our Boston-based brothers joined together for a first Mass in the household to celebrate this



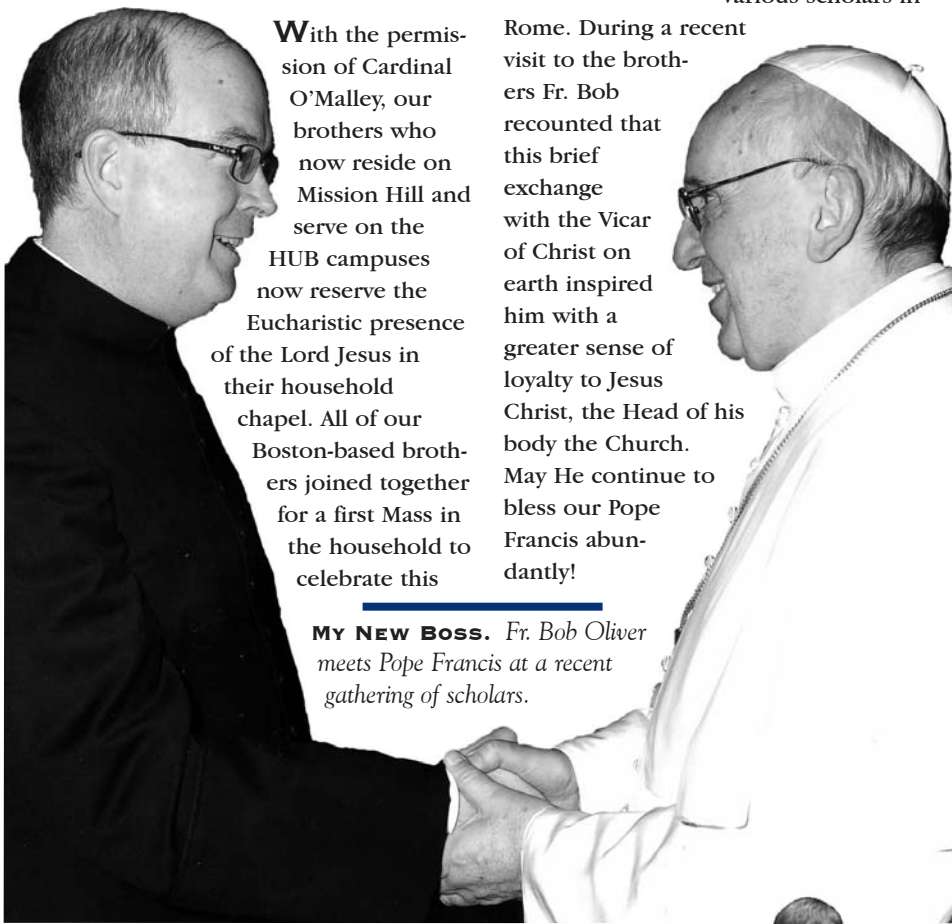
JESUS IN THE HOUSE. The Boston-based brothers gather in our Mission Hill chapel for a first Mass.

great privilege. During his homily Fr. Paul Helfrich recalled the early years in our community before we had the Eucharistic Lord reserved in our prayer rooms. Now in all of our homes we are able to have the Lord's Eucharistic presence.

MEET THE POPE!

It seems as if the whole world is getting to meet and greet our new Holy Father, Pope Francis, especially since World Youth Day in Brazil. So too for Fr. Bob Oliver who had a chance to briefly meet his new boss at a gathering of various scholars in

Rome. During a recent visit to the brothers Fr. Bob recounted that this brief exchange with the Vicar of Christ on earth inspired him with a greater sense of loyalty to Jesus Christ, the Head of his body the Church. May He continue to bless our Pope Francis abundantly!



MY NEW BOSS. Fr. Bob Oliver meets Pope Francis at a recent gathering of scholars.

OUR FOUNDER RETIRES

After many and varied years of service in both the Archdioceses of Newark and Boston, Fr. Philip Merdinger received his official letter of retirement from Cardinal O'Malley. To kick off this new phase of his life, Fr. Philip is spending the fall semester in our household in Tallahassee, FL. While our dear Founder is now retired, we have no worries that he will remain busy in ministering in various outreaches and serving the community. Next year, we anticipate a grand celebration of his anniversary of fifty years of priesthood!

DOUBLE MASTERS

Not only did both of these brothers earn master's degrees in their previous secular professions, but Br. Stephen Quense and Br. Adam Neri also recently completed Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry degrees

SHARING OUR VISION



A Regular Joe

BY BR. KEN APUZZO, BH

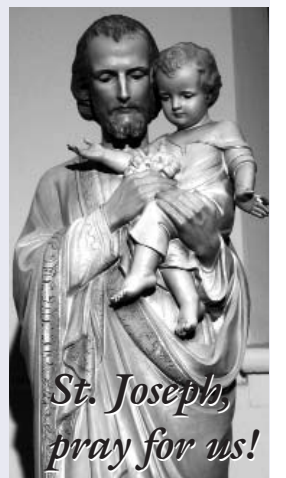
Being elected the General Superior of the Brotherhood of Hope was not something I ever remotely expected to happen to me. Who grows up thinking, "I will be a General Superior one day?" One reason I think I was so surprised is that I have always seen myself as a "regular guy." To me, a General Superior is a religious superhero who is brilliant, creative and, above all, holy.

You might ask how did I accept this call from the Lord and not take the first boat out of town like the prophet Jonah? The main reason is that I have discovered a new friend and now a personal patron: St. Joseph. He has become my patron for "regular guys" whom God has called to serve in ways that exceed their natural gifts. Just think of the many situations that Joseph had to face in his life! He was a carpenter from the small town of Nazareth hoping to have a regular marriage and a regular family. Instead, he received extraordinary dreams about his future, married an immaculately conceived bride who later experienced a divine virgin birth. He was surrounded by angels who worshiped his foster son Jesus, received

"How did I accept this call? ... I have discovered a new friend and personal patron: St. Joseph."

gifts from the Magi and narrowly escaped the very ticked-off King Herod. Finally, he was asked to teach the very Son of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the ways of the people of Israel.

There are no records of Joseph complaining or trying to get out of these immense responsibilities. He quietly, courageously and steadfastly did his job. To any of you out there who, like me, are in over your heads, turn to St. Joseph and receive some inspiration and help from the patron saint of "Regular Guys." †



Summer School in Session

A Unique Time of Training in the New Evangelization

BY BR. KEN APUZZO, BH
 Where I grew up, Summer School was that dreaded punishment for doing poorly in a subject or the natural outcome of failing a class. It was worse than being grounded! Not only could you not enjoy the pleasures summer brought—hanging out with friends and generally doing nothing—but you actually had to do school work. However, this past August we participated in a summer school like no other. Called the "School of the New Evangelization" (SNE) it brought together two hundred college students, chaplains

and several of our brothers for a week of teaching, training and outreach in the skills of the New Evangelization. This Catholic evangelistic training school has been run by Saint Paul's Outreach (SPO) for the past 13 years at St. Thomas University in St. Paul, Minnesota. SPO is a national Catholic organization that reaches out to Catholic students by creating supportive and formative faith communities on college campuses. We brothers have been spiritual friends with SPO for many years. Both groups have emerged from a

similar background, both with a charismatic spirituality and with a similar mission to reach college students with the Gospel message.

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SCHOOL'S IN SESSION. Br. Clinton Reed teaches college students at the School of the New Evangelization. (Photo courtesy of SPO)



SUMMER SCHOOL

CONTINUED FROM INSIDE

SNE 2013 was a weeklong retreat/conference where student leaders came from all over the country to pray, build spiritual friendships and be trained for the work of the New Evangelization on their campuses. It was incredibly inspiring to witness these young men and women sing their hearts out at daily Mass or head out into the streets of the Twin Cities for a day of service to the poor.

The scene is absolutely incredible! Imagine, if you will, a large group of college students whose predominant attitude is that “being Catholic is awesome”!

The Brothers contributed to SNE by giving a number of the training talks and generally being available for spiritual guidance or advice. Also, Fr. Philip Merdinger was the chaplain for SNE 2013. One of the sessions focused on the life and mission of a brother as men eager to make “the ultimate sacrifice” in their service for Jesus.

One of the major themes of this year’s SNE was “Follow me as I follow Christ.” (cf. 1 Cor 11:1) The students were challenged to actually “be a witness” before attempting to “speak as a witness.” The

world can bring much empty talk and all too often many of this present generation’s heroes have come up woefully short of their claims. However, all those who attended SNE were challenged to be true witnesses to a world that desperately needs faithfulness.



MISSIONARY PRAYERS. Fr. Philip, Br. Jason Zink and Br. Parker Jordan are prayed for at the final commissioning mass at School of the New Evangelization 2013. (Photo courtesy of SPO).

SNE ended with a commissioning Mass where all of the student missionaries and chaplains were urged to go back to their respective campuses and bring the love of Christ to their peers. For

a school in summer, it seemed that all who attended were eager to learn and enjoyed it immensely. Perhaps my view of summer school has finally changed. †



COLLABORATIVE

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

What has led to this amazing growth and development? To be sure, credit must be given to the members of the Brotherhood of Hope, especially Br. Ken Apuzzo. Their zeal for campus ministry is awesome to witness. In addition, they seriously increased the learning curve for the outreach. If the Oratorians were the rookies, the Brothers were the veterans!

There is another, perhaps even more

significant factor: the unity of mind, heart and vision of the campus ministry staff. We possess the entire gamut: religious brothers, a religious sister, priests from a religious community, a diocesan priest and several laywomen and laymen. And with-



A UNIFIED TEAM. Rutgers staff gather outside of the Catholic Center in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

out exception, we all share a common vision of the importance of relational evangelization, a deep love for the

Church and its liturgy, happiness in our chosen vocations and a heartfelt zeal for bringing young people to the Lord.

St. Philip Neri, the founder of the Oratory, once remarked to his brethren when they were complaining to him about the noise his young men were making outside the house: *They can chop wood on my back if it keeps them from sin!* It is my incredible privilege to work each day with men and women of the Church who generously offer their backs for ‘wood chopping’ so that young men and women can encounter the good news that God’s love can be theirs. †

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US...
in our mission of bringing the transforming love of Jesus to others, especially the young. Know that we pray for you and your intentions in our daily community prayer. Please continue to remember us in your prayers and support.

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