



BROTHERHOOD *of* HOPE

PRIMUM DEUS • DEUS SOLUM

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2009



DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE

Dr. Tom Neal, Ph.D was a guest of the Brotherhood while he finished his doctoral dissertation. Husband and father, Dr. Neal talks about living with the brothers.

The consecrated life is at the very heart of the Church as a decisive element for her mission”
- Pope John Paul II

Finally, after fourteen years of watching their service in Tallahassee I have a chance to give an account of the Hope that is the Brotherhood we all know and love. May these few words do some justice to the reality.

My wife, Patti, and I have known the Brothers since they landed in Florida in 1994 on the shores of St. Thomas More’s campus ministry. As she and I dated, got engaged, married, and began raising our four children we watched them inaugurate a quiet revolution that has given shape to a growing

BY DR. TOM NEAL, PH.D

‘movement’ of young men and women whose lives testify to the revolutionary force of a vibrant Catholic faith. This revolution is not only limited to students, but extends to the larger Catholic and non-Catholic community in North Florida – as well as the community of the Neal family.

The stories I have in regard to the brothers’ influence would fill volumes were I to collect them all. The poor and the rich, the educated and uneducated, the pleasant and the unpleasant, Catholics and non-Catholics, adults and children found in each of these men a brother whose life bled Christ, overflowed with the Spirit, and pointed to the Father.

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ANCHOR HOUSEHOLD
CONTINUED FROM INSIDE

levels of leadership appropriate to their gifts and availability – a formation that not only grounds them in the Catholic faith but enables them to become missionaries on their own campuses.

The household's proximity to campus now allows students to see the brothers' life in a more direct way, and to join the brothers for prayer and instruction right where we live. The undergraduates mentioned above are part of the men's discipleship group that meets weekly at this Cambridge house. Their commitment is impressive. Rising before dawn, they join the brothers each Friday for Morning Prayer and praise, followed by a training meeting that forms them as campus evangelists. From there they go on to attend classes all day. How inspired we are to witness this kind of commitment among young Catholics.

Already we're seeing the benefits of regular contact between the student community and the Brotherhood life. We've seen young men seeking each other out as accountability partners, a growing "hospitality awareness" leading to more evangelistic initiative amongst even our newest members, and veteran students commenting on the notable increase in attendance at events this year.

"I love praying with the brothers." That's how one junior explains his willingness to venture out before dawn. We are blessed to see so quickly the benefits of establishing our newest 'anchor household' near BU campus. To our benefactors especially we are most grateful. †



DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE
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I had the distinct pleasure of living over two years with them five or more days a week, sometimes overnight, while I finished my Ph.D in Religion at FSU. Their welcome of me into their home and life, as well as their unwavering

encouragement and support, counts among my life's most humbling and graced experiences. Those years in their home I watched their life up-close. How often in life does one's idealized view of others modify or evaporate as one comes to know them up close and personal? But I must say in total honesty: the more I saw these men for who they were, the deeper my respect for them grew. Why? These men wholly identify everything in their life – eating, drinking, illness, chores, prayer – with

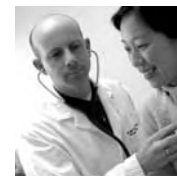
their consecration. They are real, they are funny, they are honest, they are imperfect. They are lovers of Christ in the details, where their faithfulness shines brightest.

I recall also the many times I spent teaching them theology. Those were extraordinary times. They challenged me to think deeply, practically, and that knowledge exists for the sake of charity: I learn in order that I might give away my knowledge.



The Neal family.

My identity and work as a husband, as a father, as a theologian, as a man of faith is forever imprinted with the brothers' charisma, and with their irreducibly diverse personalities that show just how diverse unity can be. I hope my life worthily testifies to this Hope that is in me. God has gifted the Church with the Brotherhood of Hope as an anchor in the storm. Let us give thanks. Amen. †



a Second Opinion

A Doctor and Former Novice Reflects on His Stay with the Brothers.

BY DR. GEORGE BROWNE, MD

When I stepped off the plane at Logan airport back in October, I was relieved to see the familiar face of Brother John McCabe waiting to greet me. I was a displaced doctor - a refugee of sorts - leaving Texas in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike. Separated for a time from my wife and family, I had been sent by Dr. Grant, the supervisor at my hospital/school worksite at UTMB, to study for two months at Harvard "while we settle things down here." Thankfully the Brotherhood of Hope, where I had once been a novice, agreed to be my home away from home far from all that was familiar to me.

During my sojourn, I reflected back on my days of formation in the Brotherhood. I realized afresh how that time period has informed much of who I am today as a man, as a husband, and as a father. I thought of the richness of the liturgical seasons my family now lives that I first experienced from the Brotherhood's life. In the midst of the tumult of the world, I found myself amongst the brothers who are a rock and a hope. Instead of staying in some lonely apartment, I was privileged to be in a sea of grace. To me it was a taste of what heaven is going to be like: the celibate call and the married call rejoicing together. †

WE NEED YOUR HELP.

The Brotherhood of Hope gets its support through the monetary earnings of its members and from the donations of benefactors. Since most of us work for sacrificial wages or for no pay at all, please consider becoming a financial sponsor so that our fruitful missions can continue. Our website offers convenient electronic giving options. Your prayers and support are greatly needed in our evangelization.

BROTHERHOOD OF HOPE

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AROUND THE BROTHERHOOD



CATHOLIC-JEWISH DIALOGUE

A unique three-part series of discussions between representatives of the Catholic and Jewish faiths occurred this semester at Rutgers University. The Catholic Center in conjunction with the Bildner Center for Jewish Life and the Rutgers Hillel Center, drew students of both Jewish and Christian backgrounds together to grow in mutual understanding of each others' faith through dialogue. The first gathering featured guest speakers representing each faith who addressed how common areas such as traditions and seasons inspire both faiths. With these discussions as the backdrop, later meetings were focused on small groups where those present also had ample time to meet one another individually. Already these meetings have prompted a series of smaller meetings between Catholic and Jewish students on the campus.



NEW BROTHERHOOD GOVERNMENT

At the conclusion of the Sixth Assembly of the Brotherhood of Hope on December 31st a new government was elected to serve the brothers. Joining re-elected General Superior Rahl Bunsä are councilors-elect, (left to right) Br. Ted Psemeneke, First Councilor Br. Stephen Quense and Br. Jude Lasota. Please pray that these brothers will embody the words our governing documents use to describe our leaders:



that they are "men who love the Lord... who are eager to see others love and serve the Lord and who love their Brothers."



ON THE BIG SCREEN IN DC

Students from the Catholic Student Union at FSU had a unique experience of seeing one of their fellow pilgrims on the big-screen this year at the annual March for Life in Washington, DC. FSU freshman, Amanda Hamilton was asked by the organizers of the youth rally at the Verizon Center to share her pro-life witness with the 30,000 high school and college students gathered there. In her presentation Amanda described her first encounter with the Catholic students of FSU when attending the same event as a high school senior the previous year, "I was at a point when I was wondering what I should do next... where I should go to college. Right in front of me about fifty students from FSU sat down. Eventually, I turned to my mother and said, 'That's where I want to go!' I haven't regretted it since!" Year in and year out, the students at our four campus ministries give up valuable sleep and study time to witness to the sanctity of life and as Amanda attested, witness to the faith-filled Catholic communities at these campuses.

BISHOP SPEAKS AT NU MINISTRY

It isn't everyday that a bishop comes to visit one of our campus ministries, so it was a great privilege to welcome our regional bishop, the Most Reverend Robert Hennessey, not once but twice to our outreach at Northeastern University this school year. Recently Bishop Hennessey spoke at our Wednesday night NULife meeting, despite undergoing minor surgery earlier the same day! After joining in with the packed room of students for praise and worship, his Excellency proceeded to share in his relaxed, familiar style stories of his life as a pastor and bishop. The evening gave students a unique window into the Office of Shepherd in the Church.



MOST REVEREND ROBERT HENNESSEY joins in praise and worship at the start of the meeting.



TEAM TEACHING IN BELGIUM

Our very own Fr. Bob Oliver joined Bruce Yocum of the Servants of the Word in the November to give a conference on Catholic Spirituality to a covenant community called "Jerusalem" in Brussels, Belgium. Bruce has been a longstanding teacher in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and a leader in the Sword of the Spirit, a worldwide association of various communities. Fr. Bob and Bruce, who have been collaborating on conferences for several years, then spent some days meeting together at the Servant of the Word house in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

SHARING OUR VISION



Our 6th Assembly

BY BR. RAHL BUNSA, BH

Question: What occurs every four years, requires preparations and perseverance, and entails travel, meetings, and ceremonies? **Answer:** No, not the Olympics, but rather our Brotherhood Assemblies. We recently concluded one, so I'd like to share about it with you. Other groups of Consecrated Life in the Church also have such gatherings, usually called their "General Chapter." It's a special time for the community to preserve and develop their founding patrimony (heritage-vision), review their common life and missions, revise their legislative documents, and elect the next government. Spiritually it's also a tremendous opportunity for the Lord Jesus to deepen the communal bonds of unity. Thanks be to God we experienced all of these!

The Brotherhood's Assembly consists of all our members in perpetual vows. Preparations begin a year in advance and culminate in a week long gathering at our headquarters in Somerville, Massachusetts. Like previous Assemblies, this one revealed remarkable consensus on the particular issues we addressed together - for example, aspects of our communal prayer and poverty, our vocational efforts, our financial status, and a new mission motto: *Proclaiming Christ our Hope.*

"Preparations begin a year in advance and culminate in a week long gathering..."



Our Assembly also discerned to be connected anew with the large charismatic lay movement that influenced our beginnings: the Sword of the Spirit. In recent years we've been networking more with this "community of communities," especially with the People of Hope in New Jersey and the Servants of the Word international Brotherhood (both of whom have been mentioned in previous newsletters). We are grateful for God's providence, and we look forward to discovering new ways of relating and collaborating with this impressive and growing ecclesial movement.

Often we brothers have thanked you for praying for our mission of the new evangelization on college campuses. But I'd also like to express gratitude for your prayers for our Brotherhood's communal life, particularly our spiritual and fraternal unity which was so evident at our Assembly. The "unity of the Spirit" and the "bond of peace" (Ep. 4:3) that we regularly experience is a tremendous sign of God's Thank you kindly for participating in that grace through your prayers. †

A New Anchor on Granite Street

BY BR. TED PSEMENEKI, BH

In a recent January morning two undergraduate men from Boston University made their way over the BU Bridge to Cambridge, shoulders hunched against the blasts of bitterly cold air sweeping up the Charles River. The time was 6:45 a.m. and the roads were not yet clogged with the day's rush hour bustle. Crossing the street and continuing a short block, their destination was the second floor of a gray-green house on the corner of Granite and Brookline streets: the newest Brotherhood household in the Archdiocese of Boston. What began as a vision presented by Br. Rahl Bunsä to a close circle of Brotherhood friends and benefactors has been realized this year in the establishment of our new Cambridge house. Already it is emerging as an evangelistic hub for the Catholic student community at Boston University.

Applying lessons learned from our other houses in NJ and FL, the Brother-

hood established the Cambridge household to allow the resident brothers to focus on one principle campus ministry mission. We call them "anchor households" because they support and stabilize what we term "apostolate communities" at our outreaches.

The idea is simple: if students are going to be a community, they first need to see a community. The proximity and accessibility of the brothers' communal life offers students a vision for dynamic unity that is vibrantly Catholic in its identity. Campus apostolate communities are rooted in the rich sacramental life of

OUR NEW HOUSEHOLD

A short walk from BU campus, our new anchor household brings the Brotherhood life to the student community at BU.

the Church, and grow spiritually and communally through direct evangelistic outreach as well as through retreats, small groups, weekly prayer/formation meetings and a host of other social and service events. Apostolate communities emphasize the formation of students to fulfill different

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