



BROTHERHOOD *of* HOPE™

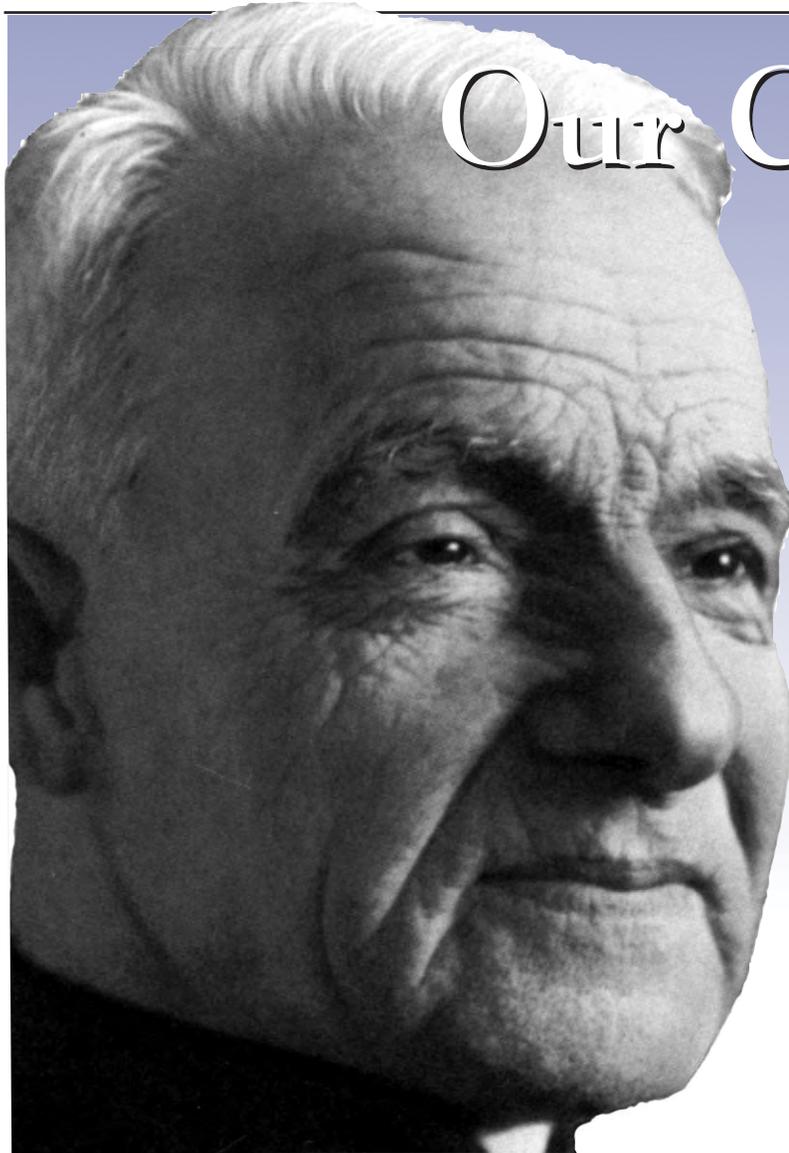
PRIMUM DEUS • DEUS SOLUM

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2011

Our Canonized Brother

A Fellow Religious Brother Joins the Ranks of the Saints



BY BR. TED PSEMENEKI, BH

We received a marvelous blessing around our 30th Anniversary. Mother Church canonized St. André Bessette -- a man who shares our vocation to religious brotherhood.

Our community has a special love for Brother André. In 1999 our Founder, Fr. Philip Merdinger, named him the "second patron" of our life (after St. John the Baptist). The following year, during the Church's great Jubilee Year, we were privileged to make a pilgrimage to his home in Montreal, St. Joseph's Oratory. The pilgrimage deepened our friendship with this inspiring brother -- a man like us, fully consecrated to Jesus through vows of chastity, poverty and obedience who lived in fraternal community. Since that time we've been hoping and praying that one day he'd be canonized. Little did we know this would happen during this Anniversary year!

Alfred Bessette was born in Canada on August 9, 1845. Orphaned at the age of twelve, he lived with various relatives. Like his special patron St. Joseph, he then spent many years working in different trades as a laborer. Through the aid of his spiritual director, who stated in his letter of

recommendation, "I am sending you a saint," this simple man entered the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1870, taking the name Brother André.

Among other tasks, he was assigned to be the doorkeeper at the community's high school in Montreal. Reflecting later on this, he'd often joke that "when I joined this community, the superiors showed me the door, and I remained there for 40 years." During those decades he fostered a devotion to Saint Joseph while attending to the sick and afflicted. He soon became known as the "Miracle Man" of Montreal curing through the use of sacramentals like St. Joseph medals and oil from the candle lit in front of his statue. Brother André would often repeat in his great humility, "I am a man just like you," and attribute any healings to God through St. Joseph's intercession.

With ever bigger crowds of the sick, poor and needy gathering in front of the school, protests soon emerged from the students' parents and even some community members. In 1904 Brother André, aware of this problem, built a small chapel on the hill opposite the

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AROUND THE BROTHERHOOD



TALKS ALL AROUND

Amid their many usual responsibilities, several brothers recently have given retreats, conferences and talks to various groups. Here is a quick sampling:



◆ Fellow Religious Fr. Philip Merdinger gave a conference talk at the regional meeting of the

Institute for Religious Life, entitled, "Religious Vows and the New Evangelization." Also, Fr. Bob Oliver gave presentations to two Franciscan communities on the topic of leadership, based on the writings of one of their great leaders, St. Bonaventure.

◆ Covenant Communities

Retreat talks were given by Br. Rahl Bunsu to a Sword of the Spirit Affiliate Community in Jacksonville, Florida for their 5th anniversary. This growing community was founded by Joe DiFato, the editor of The Word Among Us. Elsewhere Br. Jude Lasota and Fr. Bob Oliver gave separate weekend retreats to leaders in the People of Hope in NJ. We still don't know who received the greater blessings: them or us!

◆ Men's Ministry

The longstanding Cincinatti Men's Fellowship was pleased to have Fr. Philip give their weekend retreat entitled "Men in the Church Today." Meanwhile, the Knights of Columbus in Martinsville, NJ had Br. Patrick Reilly share his convictions and experience of the New Evangelization.

RU BELIEVES

You may have seen it on ESPN or, if you live in New Jersey, driven past signs for it on the Turnpike, but something unusual is occurring at Rutgers University this year. Through a tragic sports accident that paralyzed RU football player Eric LaGrand, a 'faith awakening' is occurring on campus.



Whether this will have lasting impact on the religious faith at RU is still to be seen, but Eric's faith in the Lord certainly is solid. Br. Ken Apuzzo, the Catholic Chaplain to the football team, said this: "Eric has absolutely amazed me! When you walk into his hospital room you won't find a young man filled with self-pity and bitterness. On the con-

trary, you will find Eric smiling and welcoming you. Eric and his family are filled with hope -- in his therapy, in his indomitable spirit and especially in his almighty God! Here's a young man who believes he has a bright future, and everyone else who encounters him can't help but also believe!"

BEACH VOCATIONS

The Serra Club in Vero Beach, FL invited our Superior, Br. Rahl Bunsu, to speak about Church vocations. Their former president had heard that we've cultivated about 60 priestly and religious vocations over the years, and wanted to hear more. Afterwards a guest named Sherry emailed us: "What an inspiration you were last night! There's so much negative news around -- so it is wonderful to hear such a 'bope-filled' story. How do you brothers do it? The Holy Spirit gives results in a geometric progression of talent and gifts. The Brotherhood of Hope is living proof!!"

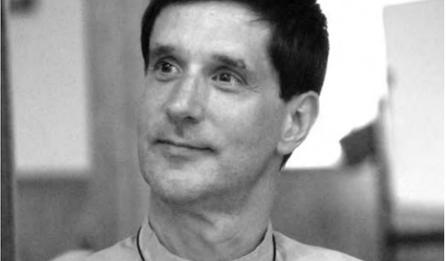
CATHOLICTV ON-LINE

If you didn't see any of our Hope on Campus series on TV you can watch the re-runs or, better yet, visit our website: www.brotherhoodofbope.org



to select which of the thirteen episodes you prefer to watch. One New Hampshire fan said, "Outstanding! I am in awe... a most powerful message."

SHARING OUR VISION



True Confessions

BY BR. RAHL BUNSA, BH

It's humbling, but permit me to make a true confession about Lent: it's not exactly my favorite time of the year. In fact something inside of me actually resists it.

Perhaps you may be speculating about my reasons for this resistance. Is it because of certain penitential practices in the Brotherhood?... or the persistent coldness of Boston?... or the protracted length of the season? My answers are yes, affirmative, and definitely. It's all three!

Admitting this weakness upfront has been a helpful first step toward Lenten spiritual growth. But a second step likewise is needed: actively subordinating my 'true confession' to other more-important and lasting truths. For example:

- "Remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return" (Ash Wed. Mass).
- "Apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5), yet "with God all things are possible" (Mk 10:27).
- "God is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Pet 3:9).
- "You have made us for Thyself O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee" (St. Augustine).
- "Entire conformity and resignation to the divine will is truly the only

"The more I've meditated on such truths, the more God has enabled me willingly to embrace His summons to deeper Lenten purification and Christification."

road that leads us to taste and enjoy that peace which sensual and earthly men know nothing of" (St. Philip Neri).

The more I've meditated on such truths, the more God has enabled me willingly to embrace His summons to deeper Lenten purification and Christification. That's grace! And by God's grace all of us can experience this spiritual fruit - even though, as children of Adam, we all have innate resistances to Lent and ultimately to God.

So let us pray for each other during this 40 day 'yearly retreat,' that God's grace may fortify us in overcoming our resistances. If we sincerely seek the Lord, He will ennoble us with deeper conversion and freedom of heart. We can be confident of this, for "He is able to do more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power at work within us" (Eph. 3:20). †

No Greater Love

BY PAULA ROSOFSKY
his academic year a record number of interns have volunteered at least a year's worth of service at one of the campuses at which the Brotherhood of Hope ministers. After two years of intern work at Rutgers University, here's what FSU alumna Paula Rosofsky has

to say about her experience so far.

Before I moved to New Jersey as an intern, I spent a year praying for the Lord to give me peace in the direction I would head after graduation. Being an intern definitely has its chal-

lenges, but I am blessed with the

peace and protection that comes from saying yes to the Lord. Those who decide to offer a year of service through the Brotherhood of Hope's Internship Program do so because the radical witness of the Brothers has changed their lives.

This desire for agape (self-giving) love -- to give back

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A FLOCK OF INTERNS. Seven out of the eight interns (left to right, with place of ministry), Paula Rosofsky (Rutgers U.), Natalie Aleman (Rutgers U.), Ricky La Belle (Boston U.), Dave Woods (Rutgers U.), Kristen Ohlson (Florida State), Kevin Garcia (Rutgers U.) and Scott Chuchla (Florida State); not pictured, Michael Barrett (Northeastern U.).



CANONIZED BROTHER

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school through donations he received for this project.

This was the beginning of the magnificent Oratory of St. Joseph that now stands there after more than 50 years of construction.

Brother André, who was in poor health his whole life, died on January 6, 1937 at the age of 91. His burial had to be postponed for several days until the last of more than one million people were able to pass by his bier to express their respect. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1982 and canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on October 17, 2010, who said of the saint: "He lived the beatitude of the pure of heart."

In our day Saint André stands as a reminder that the witness of religious consecration should provide hope for people. He did so by his humility, prayer, intercession, spiritual and physical healings. Through his life of religious consecration and ministry, this doorkeeper became the doorway for many to enter into fullness of life in Christ.

Fr. Philip exhorted us once in these words, "As a Brother and as a model of religious life, so very fruitful in his consecrated chastity as a brother, I pray that by his intercession we may offer a model of renewed religious life as brothers and become as spiritually fruitful in our generation as he was in his."

Saint André, pray for us! †



INTERNS

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and to bring other students closer to the Lord -- was certainly the case for me.

An intern's main goal is to be present on campus looking for opportunities to bring Christ into the lives of students.

This has many forms: working out in the gym, playing sports, talking over a meal, listening to a student cry through a difficult story, or laughing over a cup of coffee. Amidst many opportunities like service trips, retreats and countless student

events, what I love most is meeting with students one-on-one. I have found that as I help students with their struggles, I am

able to grow closer to the Lord and overcome my own. In "The Voyage of Dawn Treader," C.S. Lewis paints the picture of a boy with a stony heart and selfish demeanor who must peel away his "dragon-like" disposition. This year the Lord has helped me peel away my selfishness,

fear and sin and He has brought me to a place where I can become the woman I desire to be: my truest self.

Interning has changed my life. I became an intern to serve other students, but I never expected to be served myself. I've been blessed by the spiritual fatherhood

of Brother Ken Apuzzo, which has been a reminder of the depth and intimacy of my Heavenly Father's love for me. This agape



PAULA'S PIZZAZZ: *Our intern's joy is quite contagious with students at Rutgers.*

love has given me the freedom to have a heart open to the Lord and others -- and like Jesus who laid "down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13). Interning has given me a deeper understanding of who I am and of God's presence in my life. It is preparing me for my vocation as a teacher, a wife, and a mother, while making me a better friend, daughter and sister.

I am overwhelmed by the Lord's love for me in placing me at Rutgers University. I'm forever changed by the experiences I've had as an intern. The mission of the Brotherhood's campus ministries is to cast out into the deep, to go out on campuses and help young Catholics live their faith in a radical way. Interning has been a great opportunity for me to grow closer to the Lord through service and the beautiful witness of the Brothers. †

Thoughts From Other Interns

"Through the internship experience I have learned to have a heart for God's people. To just love and build sincere relationships rooted in Christ; everything else is out of my hands."

- Kevin Garcia, RU intern

"My experience as an intern instilled in me an even greater desire for evangelization and gave me many opportunities to be a witness. I'm now more confident in seeking opportunities to share my faith with others."

- Malbri Reyes, former FSU intern

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.

BROTHERHOOD OF HOPE

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