

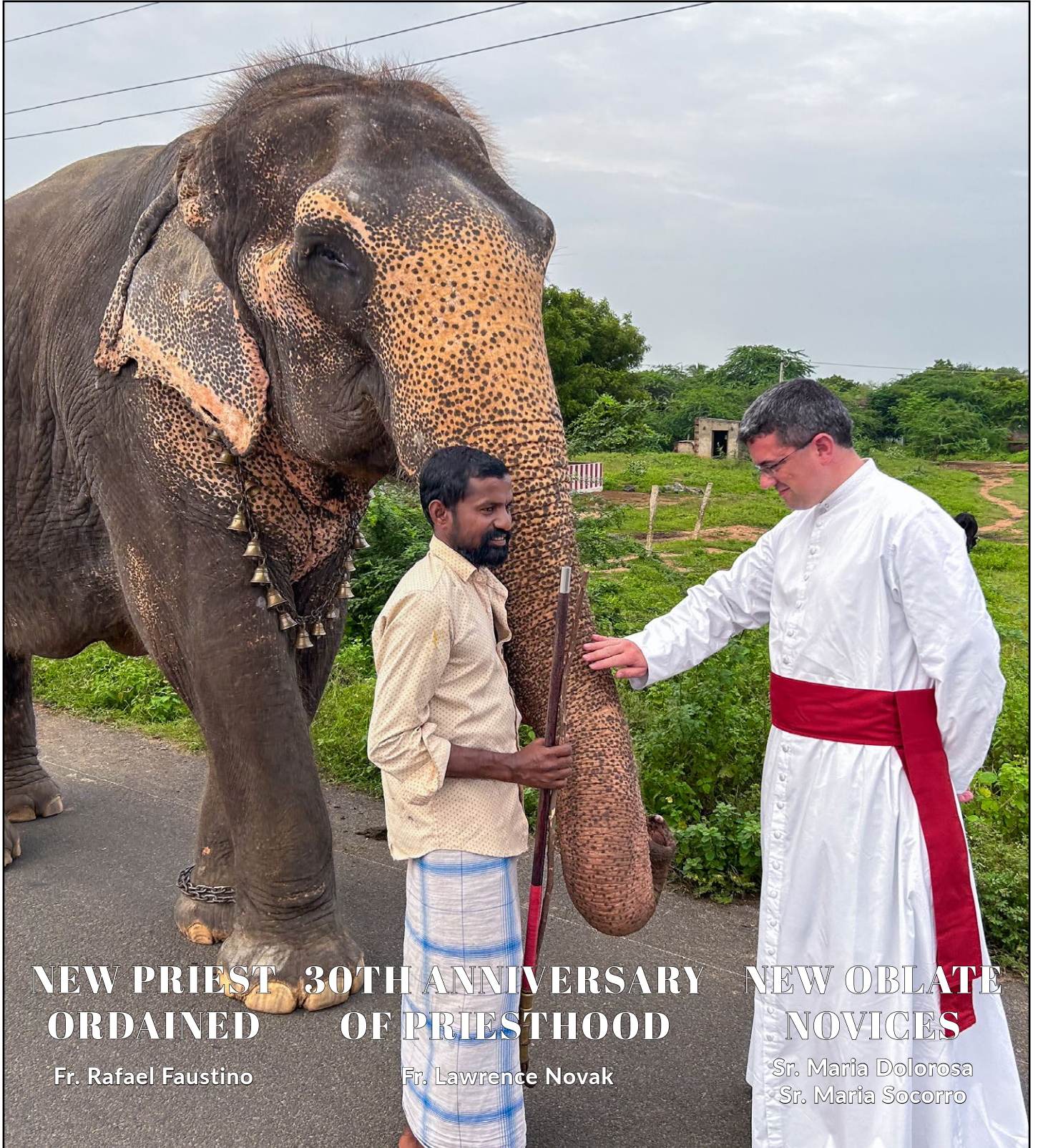


APOSTLE



SSPX ASIA DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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**NEW PRIEST
ORDAINED**

Fr. Rafael Faustino

**30TH ANNIVERSARY
OF PRIESTHOOD**

Fr. Lawrence Novak

**NEW OBLATE
NOVICES**

Sr. Maria Dolorosa
Sr. Maria Socorro

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District Superior of Asia

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EDITORIAL



Dear Friends and Benefactors,

A newly ordained priest is a wonderful sight to behold and a joy to all who meet him. A priest who has arrived at 30 or more years in the priesthood is even more of a wonderful thing. Inside this edition of the Apostle, you can read about examples of both cases.

Besides newly ordained priests, here in the District of Asia we have several priests who have already reached this milestone of more than thirty years of service in the Vineyard of the Lord. Let us continue to pray for these priests, both new and old, so that they might follow Our Lord more with each passing day.

One of the annual duties of the priest is to attend a retreat for the good of his soul. You can also read that this last Summer, we were fortunate enough to host a 30-day Ignatian retreat for the priests and brothers at our Brother's Novitiate in Iloilo. A great grace for all those who attended and the fruits are still being harvested to this day. Deo Gratias!

Of course, the priests are joined by the good works of the SSPX Brothers and Oblates here in the District of Asia. You can also read about the new Oblate novices and the big project to build a convent for the growing community of Our Lady of Sorrows Novitiate.

My dear readers, please continue your generous support of the many apostolic works here in Asia. We are eternally grateful for all your support in these humble works of God.

Be assured of our prayers for all of you and please pray for us as well.

Thank you.

In Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Patrick Summers
District Superior of Asia

Priestly Ordination of Rev. Fr. Rafael Vincent Faustino

On December 16, 2023, Father Rafael Faustino, along with a Brazilian and two Argentinians, received ordination to the priesthood at Our Lady Co-Redemptrix Seminary in Buenos Aires, officiated by Bishop Fellay.

The *Apostle Magazine* conducted an insightful interview with Fr. Faustino, offering a glimpse into the profound journey of his vocation.

Discovery of Tradition and the SSPX

When I was born in 1998, our family was attending the Novus Ordo church. It was only when I was eight years old that, by the grace and mercy of God, my mother came to know about the Traditional Latin Mass through her aunt. During that time, the diocese was starting to abolish the Mass of all times from the parishes. Through the perseverance of my aunt, she managed to locate an SSPX Church in New Manila which is now the Church of Our Lady of Victories (OLVC). Immediately after receiving my first Holy Communion in my local Catholic school, my mother decided to go to OLVC to assist at our first Traditional Latin Mass. Due to the long distance from our house, travelling to the OLVC was proving to be a challenge, and that prevented us from going to Mass every Sunday. However, about two months later and with the help of God's grace, we were able to find the way to go to Mass regularly.

Interest in Serving Mass

When I was with the Novus Ordo church, I had wanted to be an altar server and also esteemed to be a priest. I tried many times to contact the head of the altar servers but was unsuccessful. Without undergoing training, I was not able to serve at the Novus Ordo Mass. I believe this is Divine Providence at work because after assisting at the Traditional Latin Mass at OLVC, I was immediately captivated by the sight of young boys wearing red cassocks. I thought to myself that I wanted to serve like them. Knowing my keen interest, my aunt brought me to the sacristy to meet the



altar servers. Finally, I was trained and I could serve Mass. I began to love the Holy Sacrifice just by serving it. As I watched the priests saying Mass so reverently, I was very impressed. As an eight-year-old boy then, I said to myself: "Yes, the priest I see here, he is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself celebrating the Mass."



Enrolment in OLVCS

When Our Lady of Victories Catholic School (OLVCS) opened in 2008, it was impossible for me to join the school due to the high costs and the long travelling time involved. So, I had to continue attending the local Catholic school while still assisting and serving the Traditional Latin Mass on Sundays and feast days at OLVCS.

Divine Providence, again, opened the way for me when Fr. Robert McPherson (then Principal of OLVCS and now the Vice Rector of St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in the US) embarked on the vision of opening a boarding school for boys so that we could study and live in the same place. Being able to talk to a priest while being an altar server was a great joy for me and being able to go to school at OLVCS was even a greater grace from God. Staying at the boarding school provided me with more opportunities to talk to the priests. One of the visions of the OLVCS is to form future Catholic leaders for the Catholic population in the Philippines. Catholic leaders could be fathers of the family and even priests, who would be leading souls to Heaven. As years passed, my desire to become a priest became increasingly more evident.

Formation at St Bernard's Novitiate

My journey continued with the transition of school principals from Fr. McPerson to Fr. Michael Fortin, and then to Fr. Peter Fortin, the current school principal. I spent more time with the former principal Fr. Michael Fortin. He said: "Well, we'll pray for it. Continue to do what you are doing right now, and focus on your study." After finishing my high school education, my next step was to continue with my studies at a local university to pursue a career before applying to enter the seminary. Again, Divine Providence made it possible for me to be accepted into St Bernard's Novitiate immediately after my high school graduation. Fr. Coenraad Daniels, rector of St. Bernard's Novitiate, allowed me to enter as a pre-seminarian in June 2015. Since I was still underage, I had to spend two years in formation before I could apply to enter the seminary.

In March 2017, I finally completed my formation and could soon join the seminary. Living with the Brothers during my formation years greatly helped me in preparing for my seminary life. They taught me their religious way of life by their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. I also learned to adhere strictly to our vocation and to grow in spirituality. I am really very grateful to God for the years I could spend in St. Bernard's Novitiate which I called my second home.

Commencement of Seminary Formation

I spent seven years in the seminary. It was an experience no words could express. To state it simply, it was an amazing moment of grace. I started my early years in the Holy Cross Seminary in Australia. Adjusting to seminary life was not a problem for me as I was already living it at St Bernard's Novitiate. However, the difference was that Holy Cross was an international seminary where the seminarians were not just Filipinos but there were other nationalities: South Korean, Indian, Australian and African. We learned the importance of living together as one community with the same supernatural spirit and faith. As we were all striving with the same goal of becoming priests, we helped and encouraged each other by following and seeking the will of God for each one of us. We wanted to be a part of the Priestly Society of St. Pius X within this one family in the Catholic Church.

The studies were more intense as the focus was on priestly formation and learning the principles of the spiritual life. As the training progressed, I learned more about the great teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas. Our founder, Archbishop Lefebvre, had wanted all seminarians to learn and love St. Thomas Aquinas and his teachings. I learned a lot from all the professors and directors at Holy Cross Seminary.



All newly ordained priests con-celebrating with the Bishop.

Closure of Holy Cross Seminary

It was in the middle of the week that the Superior General made the announcement about the closure of the Holy Cross Seminary. It was sad news for us. We were in the midst of finishing our exams and were already looking forward to the second semester. Of course, we were not abandoned by the Superior General. We were to be relocated separately to seminaries, in Germany, US and Argentina, in order to continue with our formation. I was to be sent here in Argentina and I was told that I have to learn Spanish in a few months. I didn't have any idea about the Spanish language. I could probably remember only a few Spanish words in Tagalog from the Spanish culture in the Philippines. But, by the grace of God, I managed to learn enough to do the operation survival of arriving in Argentina and being able to speak and communicate with the locals.



Celebrating his very first Mass in La Reja, Argentina

Commencement of Seminary Phase in Argentina

I arrived in Argentina in April 2022 to continue my last two years of theology. It was the beginning of another adventure, like another chapter of my life. Of course, there was my fear because everything was new and different to me. Although I was told that everything was the same as it is still the same SSPX, I had to learn new things here in Argentina. Just like in Holy Cross where there were different nationalities, here in Argentina, we have people from Mexico, Nicaragua, all over Central America and South America. I had to learn the cultures here in Argentina and in Latin America, just like I did in Australia. When I arrived, I felt as if I had just started a new beginning of seminary life.

During my last two years of theology, I learned again a lot from the professors. They really know how to transmit the knowledge and the love for St. Thomas Aquinas, for the Church and its teachings.

Appointment in Buenos Aires

Well, another new chapter of my life has just begun. The question on everyone's lips just before ordination is: "Where will you be assigned to, Father?" Yes, there's always that suspense in seminary life when one arrives at the last year as a deacon. My first assignment will be here in the District of South America, and in particular, in the Priory in Buenos Aires, here in Argentina. I will be assisting the prior, Reverend Fr. Luiz Claudio Camargo.

The Buenos Aires Priory was actually the foundation of the SSPX in South America. It was the very first Nuestra Señora Corredentora seminary and the first house of the SSPX here in Argentina. Archbishop Lefebvre visited this place for many years and ordained priests here before moving the seminary to La Reja. It has now become a priory with about 800 parishioners. This is a busy apostolate. The congregation is still growing. We pray that more souls will be awakened to Tradition as each year passes.



Consecration of his hands by the Bishop.

Future Apostolate in the Priory

As of now, I have not received any specific assignments. I will, basically, be helping out with the common missions of the priory. It may just be celebrating Sunday Masses and hearing Confessions. I may see the possibility of also teaching catechism to the First Communicants to prepare them for Confirmation, or even teaching catechism to the adults. Just like in the District of Asia, here in Buenos Aires, they also have the Confraternity of St. Stephen for altar servers. There is a possibility that I may be asked to help with this apostolate as it is really flourishing. My role will be made clearer in the future when I get to know the priory better. Helping out in other mission centers, in Uruguay, in the outskirts of Buenos Aires or some other places may be a possibility in the future too.

First Mass
in La Reja,
Argentina.





Giving his first blessings to the Singapore faithful.



With Fr. Fortin and Fr. Gomis immediately after his ordination.

Pray for More Vocations

In conclusion, my earnest plea to all readers is to persist in praying for an increase in vocations. My last word to all readers, that is, to continue to pray for more vocations. Just as Fr. Summers has always been telling everyone in the Asian District, there is an urgent need to pray for more vocations. As our Lord says, there's so much work but very few labourers.

We could already see that there is a lot of work to do, not just in Asia but in all districts everywhere. I would encourage everyone to keep praying for more vocations for the priesthood and religious life, and to be generous in many ways. Be supportive of the mission of the SSPX started by Archbishop Lefebvre for the love of the Church. Be supportive if it is God's will for your child to be called to be a priest or religious and pray for more holy Catholic families too. Be supportive of all the seminarians who need your constant prayers to stay on course.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you, all readers, all faithful of the district for your prayers, help and support which have made this joyous day of my ordination come true! 🙏



After his first Mass in the Philippines.

New Oblate Novices Taking Their Habit



On 15th September, two new Novices, Sr. Maria Dolorosa (Miss Sayuri Usami) and Sr. Maria Socorro (Miss Mary Rose Patriarca) took their habit from Fr. Aurelito Cacho in Davao, Philippines. Blessed be God for these vocations!



30-Day Retreat for Priests and Brothers



In September 2023, our Brothers' Novitiate in Iloilo, Philippines, hosted the District of Asia's second 30-day retreat. Thirteen priests and sixteen brothers, including both professed members and postulants, participated in the spiritual recharging by following the Exercises of Saint Ignatius. We extend our gratitude to the preachers, Fr. Mark Stafki from Sydney, Australia, and Fr. Steven Reuter from Calgary, Canada, for their unwavering dedication throughout the retreat. 🇨🇵

Fr. Steven
Reuter



Fr. Mark
Stafki



Celebrating 30 Years of Serving the Lord in His Vineyard!


An editorial interview with Rev. Fr. Lawrence Gerard Novak.

Q1

Please tell us briefly about your family background.

My family is the biggest source of my stability and enthusiasm in life. I would say that the main quality of my family is to have a purpose in doing something and carrying through with it. My father was a hard working dentist; my mother is a person who is determined to remain Catholic while rearing a family with the same conviction.

I have seven siblings. There are eight of us. Four boys and four girls. I am the second to the last. One of my oldest brother is a priest of the SSPX. His name is Fr. Kenneth Novak. One of my sisters is a Traditional Dominican sister, Sister Marie Martin de Porres.

I think you could break down our family history in three parts. The beginning is a lot of family bonding. Many years ago, besides having our home in a suburb of Chicago, we also had a farm a few hours away in Michigan. Nothing will ever replace the tight family spirit we had in those ten years or less. The next stage is the beginning of our life with the Society of St. Pius X. We were united in helping the Society come to Chicago and start their mission there for most of the 80's. And the last stage is when we all went our own ways to continue what was given to us in our formation. Most of us have stayed faithful to what our parents taught us. 



Ordained by Bishop Fellay on 25th June 1994.

Q2

When did you first realize you wanted to be a priest?

When I was three years old, I was miraculously healed of a problem in my head. For several months, I was having dizzy spells that were causing me to pass out and fall to the floor. Doctor told my parents to take me to the hospital promptly, because I probably had a brain tumor or some other problem in the head. On the way, my mother said it would be good if we went to see Fr. Leo McNamara in downtown Chicago first. Fr. McNamara was a mystic and a contemporary of Padre Pio. They knew each other supernaturally, even though they never met in person. Father had the full body relic of a Roman martyr, St. Maximina, in his church apartment. My parents told me that after I spent some time in front of the relic, Father put his hands on my head while he talked to my parents. Finally, he said that we would go to the hospital, and all the tests would come back negative... which is exactly what happened, and I never had another dizzy spell again! A couple years after that (about the year 1972), when I was about five years old, our family was attending the Traditional Mass. We never had to go to the Modern Mass. Our priest was an independent priest in his sixties who was still celebrating only the Traditional Mass. For some reason, at that time, I started saying that I wanted to be a priest. Normally, there was no reason for me to be inspired by such a thing, but I was. I am certain that Fr. McNamara and St. Maximina had something to do with this.



Giving his first priestly blessing to his sister.

When I was fourteen years old, the Society started coming to Chicago to offer Mass. I had never seen a Traditional priest that was younger than sixty. I never saw a Traditional priest who wore a cassock full time. I never saw a Traditional priest who flew all over the country to give the Traditional Mass in as many places as possible to get the Faith out there. I was inspired by all three of these things, and I was sure that God was calling me to the priesthood in this way. I was sure that he wanted me to do the same thing. Keep in mind that I was going to a modernist high school at that time. I was scandalized by the place. The Society priests were such a breath of fresh air! I was so relieved to be with them. I really saw my future unfolding before me at this point. 🙏



Fr. L. Novak with his parents and siblings.

Q3

Was your family supportive of your decision to enter the seminary?

My family was very supportive of my vocation. In fact, they were so supportive that sometimes it was difficult to discern if I was responding to a personal vocation from God or if I was just “going along with my family”. You see, my family was very involved with the Society coming to Chicago to say Mass. My dad was the coordinator of the mission, and my mother was the main organizer of setting everything up at the hotel room for Mass. And pardon the bragging, but we did an outstanding job. We – my mother, my siblings and I - loved doing it. Anyway, by the time I got to the seminary and spent a few years there, my immaturity started coming out. I had gone to the seminary when I was only eighteen years old, fresh out of high school. I never went to college. I never got a degree. I never had any interest in any other profession besides being a priest. It was sort of like I had stardust in my eyes. And then, I started to wonder if I had gone to the seminary just because “it was the family thing to do”. It really was a conundrum (a head-banger).

Bishop Williamson, the rector of the seminary, could see that I was struggling with this, but instead of telling me that I should leave the seminary, he told me to “grow up” for a year or two at St. Mary’s, doing whatever clerical responsibilities they might have for me over there. I accepted obediently. I became a catechism teacher and house father (a dormitory supervisor). Fr. Ramón Angles had just arrived as the new Rector of St. Mary’s, and he was so kind to me. He spent a lot of time with me. He gave me confidence in many ways. He showed me how many of my doubts were nonsense. After spending two years there and growing up a bit, I was certain that God was in fact calling me, and that this was not just a matter of pleasing my family or going along with the flow. 🙏

Q4

Is there a special moment/incident that you cherish the most as a seminarian?

It’s difficult for me to pinpoint one particular moment that I most cherish as a seminarian, but I can tell you that I really liked my whole second year as a seminarian. The first year had got me used to the discipline of the seminary: the silence, the meditation, some fasting and missing home. That being said, I really valued all the time in the chapel and visits to the Blessed Sacrament. I loved Sunday Vespers, especially the fifth Psalm in “Tonus Peregrinus”. So, I had that behind me. Then in the second year, it was as if the things I most liked from my youth were repeating themselves in my adulthood. I had learned quite a bit of Latin before I went to the seminary, thanks to a man who selflessly taught me before I went there, Mr. George Hanna (RIP). For that reason, I was in an advanced level of Latin, and it was easy. I loved to sing, and so they put me in the Schola Cantorum. I enjoyed that too. Fr. Williamson (he was not a bishop yet) was giving us our introduction to Philosophy class and our Scripture class.

Both classes were fantastic. Soccer was definitely the “seminary sport”. I could play for hours. The camaraderie was super. I had never been with such a large group of people that thought like me and had the same purpose in life that I had. I was really at home in the seminary. So, if there was a time that I would most cherish from my seminary training, it would be my whole second year of seminary. 🙏



Priestly outing in Manila.

Q5

How did you feel on the day of your ordination?

Grateful! First, because it's a grace that no one of us could ever deserve. But also, because I was relieved. It was the end of a lot of thoughts about what would life be like if I wasn't a priest. That was no longer an option. I know that I just said a couple questions back that I was sure that God was calling me after I finished my time in St. Mary's, but somehow I think the devil still wanted to bother me by making me think I couldn't do it. So when I finally put on those vestments so that I could be ordained, I was relieved that I was finally going into this, and there was no turning back now. It was time to get out of the trench and go up over the line. "Let's do this!" 🙏



Q6

Please share with us some of your most unforgettable experiences in the countries that have touched and inspired you to continue your priestly ministry with greater zeal and love for the faithful.

All my assignments have been for about five or six years, except for one which was only three and a half years. When I was first ordained, I was appointed in **El Paso, Texas**. I considered myself fortunate because I got to deal with Tex-Mex Americans, people that live on the border of the U.S. and Mexico, who are bi-cultural. As an American, I loved the simplicity of the Mexican folk. They have so much energy when it comes to going to church, showing devotion to the Holy Virgin, going to Confession, having processions. Anything that has something to do with the public profession of the Catholic faith, they are there. They're so inspiring. I was impressed by the long queue for Confession as soon as the priest would walk in the door for the afternoon Mass. And they were serious about it. No Confession, no Communion! After the Mass, the children would all come up to the Communion rail for their special blessing.

As part of this assignment in Texas, I was also in charge of the Brothers' Novitiate for the U.S. It wasn't so big at the time. We didn't have that

many vocations, but the ones we had were memorable. I remember two young men in particular, who are now Brother Gregory and Brother Alphonsus. They came from very different backgrounds, but they were so serious about becoming brothers. I used to think: "They are going through all these classes (which were similar to our classes at the beginning of the seminary). They are going through all this training. They will never be priests, and they know that. Yet, they want to serve God the best they can." That was inspiring to me... this kind of humility and this kind of trust in God that their lives really meant something to him, and they were going to offer it to him, no matter what.



Procession in Orizaba, Mexico

I was very blessed to give regular sick calls to the elderly widow, Mrs. Concepción Hernandez. She was the niece of a canonized Mexican martyr, Fr. Pedro Maldonado. He was killed by the government on 11 February, 1937, a decade after the Cristero War. He would never sign the paper that said “this church belongs to the government of Mexico”. That was serious. They took him out! It was a brutal death by beating. It was done by the police themselves. It was Father’s favorite day of the year – the Apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes, 11 February. She loved to tell me stories about her valiant uncle. It was very inspiring to me.

I had a consoling encounter in the fall of 1999. There was an elderly priest who was dying in the **Chicago** area in the hospital, with heart problems. He happened to be the priest who gave us the Mass back in the years 1967-1971 in the Maronite Rite until another priest started giving the Mass in Latin at another chapel. He had been in a bad condition for months, but would not die. The reason is that no one was available to give him the Last Sacraments in the Traditional way, not even the other priest from his parish, since he tended towards modernism. I happened to be home for a couple days and went to visit him at the hospital. I gave him Extreme Unction and the Apostolic Blessing. He was so happy and sat up to thank me before I left. Two days later, he died. That’s all he was waiting for. Blessed be God! That was such a consolation. When I was a newborn child until I was three years old, we had attended his Mass. Thanks to him and many others, I had the Catholic Faith. And then, by a singular favor of Divine Providence, I ended up being the priest who gave him the Last Rites in the Traditional way.

I had a big assignment in the state of **Oregon** after this. That lasted for about five years, and then I was given assignments outside of the U.S. So far, I have always considered these assignments outside of the country to be a blessing, because one has to rely more on his supernatural attachment to the flock than the natural one, since one has less in common with them on the natural level. So, after Oregon, Bishop Fellay – the Superior General at that time

– recommended me for the parish in the north of Mexico, in the town called **Gomez Palacio**. I was so complimented that they considered me for such an assignment! But I have to admit, I felt like a displaced person there for some time, until I learned the language better, and the culture. And this is another one of my big consolations in the priesthood so far. After about two years there, I felt as comfortable and happy there as I ever felt in the U.S. That’s the supernatural life for you, and that’s the priesthood. They’re universal.

Some of my unforgettable experiences there were: the Wednesday afternoon Catechism classes. Normally, people try to get all their religion in on one day, Sunday. But since this was a non-urban community, the people lived in almost walking distance of the church. Therefore, the children could come out by themselves to Catechism class on Wednesday after school. We gave a lot of education and formation to those children while I was there. Another thing they did there was every day during the month of May, they would have devotions to the Blessed Mother outside in the courtyard of the priory. There was the Rosary with the offering of flowers after each decade. When it was finished, the children would receive chocolate and candy for their faithfulness. It was delightful!

While I was at this assignment, I met the son of Concepción Hernandez and his family. Concepción was mentioned earlier in the assignment in Texas. This family lived in Chihuahua, Mexico, six hours north of our priory, and six hours south of Texas. This was actually much closer to where Fr. Maldonado had been martyred in 1937. This Hernandez family was very active at our church there. We had a very curious situation. Not only the descendants of Fr. Maldonado went to our church there, but also the descendants of his persecutors – the people who brutally killed him – went to Mass there, just across the aisle from each other! It seems like his prayers for his persecutors while he was dying were very effective! They ended up at the Traditional Mass along with his nephews and nieces.



Delivering a sermon
in Saint Pius X Priory,
Singapore


My next assignment was in **Orizaba** of Veracruz. This is in the southeast of Mexico. One of my greatest pleasures there was taking care of the mission church which was attached to the priory, in a pueblo called Dos Rios. The ratio of children to adults was high there, because they are mostly farming families, and the parents need their helping hands. I met some of my most endearing parishioners ever at that church. Imagine, finishing Saturday evening Mass (not the anticipated Mass) and then going to someone's house for a repast, after the weekly sick call to the matriarch of the parish, of course. The house was humble. Dirt floor. Tortillas cooked on a log fire (fuego de leña) by some of the girls in the house. These were excellent parishioners there, very sanctified, and they were living in these conditions. That was a great lesson for me.



Enjoying a game at the Singapore Family Picnic.

After three and a half years of that, I moved to another country, **Guatemala**, the neighbor to the southeast of Mexico, where North America ends and Central America begins. The part that most sticks out in my memory about this assignment was all the traveling we did. We had to go to most of the Central American countries, except Panama. Nicaragua is a Catholic country with a Communist government. You regularly see on the news that the Communist bandits have attacked another church and defaced and destroyed more statues and altars, etc. But we went there. It was amazing the amount of faith we found there, even among these unfortunate people. As with any persecution, it tends to make the faith stronger in the ones that are left standing. That was definitely the case, and it left a deep impression on me.

And then finally I came to this assignment in **Singapore**. So exotic, so world-famous, so organized and clean. It sounded like outer space to me after being in those different places in Latin America. There are two things that impress me about this church in Singapore. The first one is how they are so committed to come to daily Mass during the week. In my other assignments, I was used to no more than five people being at the morning Mass during the week. Then, at the evening Mass we would have between ten and twenty people. Here in Singapore, even though very few people have a car, you can count on thirty people being at the morning Mass, and another thirty people at the evening Mass. I have never seen that before! Something really motivates these people. They are convinced of the need to give God Catholic worship during the week. Perhaps it's because they don't take their religion for granted, being so surrounded by paganism, and because many of them had to leave paganism to become Catholics in the first place. The other thing that impresses me about this parish is how seriously the various volunteers take their responsibilities at this church. Before coming here, I was a little more accustomed to people helping, but not with this much commitment, and especially not for free. "Where your treasure is, there is your heart also." (Matt. 6:21).

Perhaps these are not all spectacular experiences, but they certainly have touched and inspired me to continue my priestly ministry with more zeal and love for the faithful. Blessed be God! 




Working in his office in Singapore.

Q7

What would you say to any person contemplating a priestly or religious vocation?

First of all, you are not choosing God. God is choosing you. I know we speak this way: "I decided to go to the seminary." "I always wanted to go to the convent, and so I went." But that is just the way we talk. In fact, it is God who is calling. That's where the word "vocation" comes from (latin: vocare = to call). Since that is the case, you really don't have a right to say "no". And the next thing is: God deserves first choice. Let's say that it is not certain that "you want to be a priest or a nun". You might also want to go to the university to get a degree. God deserves first choice. You first try out the seminary or the convent, and THEN you try the worldly career if it doesn't work out. If you start with the worldly career, you may never get to go to the seminary. And it's possible that you might have had a vocation, but it just got smothered by this worldly pursuit. Just do the math. In the 1950's, there were vocations by the thousands,

and there always was a place for these priests and religious. There was no shortage of jobs. But now, in comparison, people are becoming priests and nuns at just a fraction of a percent of what they once were. What happened to all those vocations? Did God suddenly stop calling people? No. Men and women have become stingy in responding. They have put the worldly pursuit in front of the calling from God. Simple mathematics can answer that question. May God be praised for these thirty years of priesthood! I certainly am thankful for them. It is a pleasure to talk about it with you. It wouldn't be possible without our Blessed Mother. She is the one who forms her Son in our souls, especially priestly souls. This is how his kingdom extends. If she could make use of me for this calling, she can make use of a lot of people.

God bless you! 

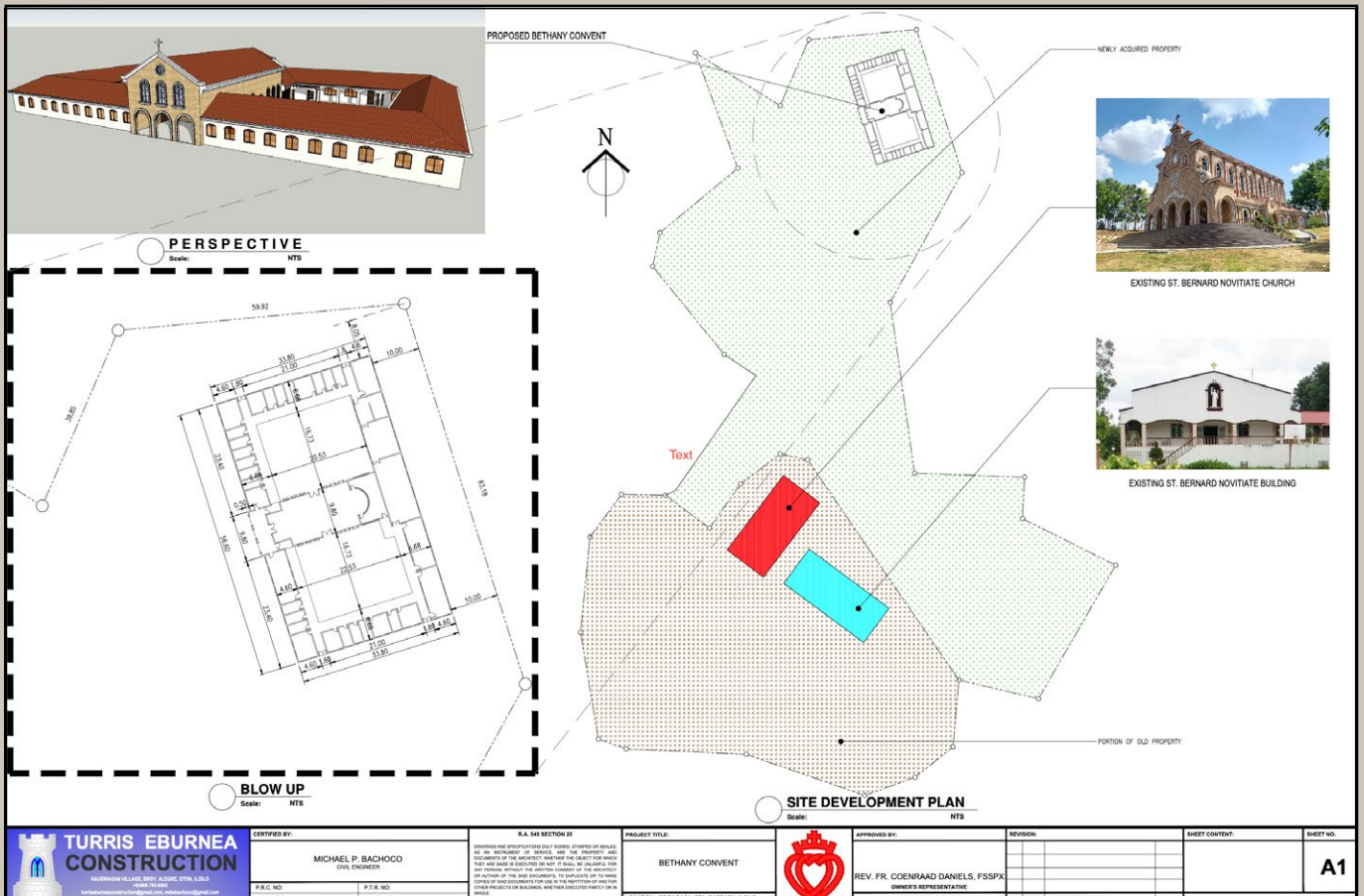
The Construction of the Oblate Sisters' Convent in Iloilo, Philippines



Fr. Summers breaking the ground.



Blessing of the cornerstone.



Dear Friends and Benefactors,

It has been some time since I wrote you. And, even this time, I must write you from a rather strange angle: With little news from the St. Bernard Novitiate, and much begging, not for us but for the Oblate Sisters.

Why? Well, we have been asked to take charge of a very special project; The construction of the Oblate convent on the far side of our property and the final move of the Sisters from the city of Davao in the south of the Philippines to their new place, here, as soon as the building is done.

Let me explain a little: Way back, some 26 years ago, was established in Manila a house for young ladies to help them discern their vocations. This house was moved a little later to a small premise in Iloilo which was called "Bethany House". The founding proved to be good, for a number of vocations came from it; some for the Oblates, some for the Sisters of the Society, some Dominicans, etc. However, the premise in Iloilo had its difficulties and so it was decided to move the sisters to Davao.

Shortly thereafter, on the 15th of September 2018, the "Bethany House" became a Novitiate of Our Lady of Sorrows for the Oblates by the permission of the Superior General of the Society.

In Davao, they have remained up until now in two adjacent rental free houses offered by a very generous benefactor. Notwithstanding such generosity, the premises again, are offering many difficulties from whence the need to find some large enough and permanent convent.

By the request of the General House of the Society, and the express permission by the Superior General, it has been decided to move them back



Fr. Daniels presenting the project.

once again to Iloilo, but this time to the far end of the large grounds of the Brother's Novitiate.

It seems therefore quite appropriate that we should approach you for help, since these Sisters, since their founding, have never had a place of their own where they could form vocations

according to the mind of the Church.

Final Plans and preparations are already on their way and we just started the construction at the beginning of the dry season. Remember what happened to us in the past, how the construction of the Church was turned into a lake?



Overview of the construction site.

So, it began in January 2024. The time-frame of the construction would be determined by the available funds, and if good, can be finished in 2 years.

The estimation is 50 million pesos... Or, rounded off: one million US dollars. We are counting on St. Joseph once again... Ahh, St. Joseph!! And of course, on you! Please be assured of our prayers for you and especially the prayers of the sisters who will be much indebted to you. 🙏

God bless you!
Fr. Coenraad Daniels
c.daniels@fsspx.email



“There are billions of souls in Asia who do not know Our Lord and are in need of your prayers, and of more vocations!”
Fr. Summers visiting classrooms in the USA to explain the work of the SSPX in Asia.



“Even elephants appreciate good French Cuisine”
Fr. Foucauld le Roux (Secretary General) encounters an elephant in his recent visit to Asia.



It took almost two years from the announcement of the project to its conception, completion and installation. But now it's done, to the great joy of our faithful in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: in January 2024, our chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus received its magnificent Baroque-style wooden altar, carved and gilded by hand. Many thanks to all those who made this magnificent achievement possible, whether through their artistic talent, their dedication or their generosity. The King of kings will repay them a hundredfold! 🙏



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