

October 2021  
Volume 6  
Number 10



# Passionist News Notes St. Paul of the Cross Province



## The 1st Session of Passionist Family Formation


**PASSIONIST FAMILY FORMATION e-LEARNING**

### People of Faith Session 1

**Robin Ryan, C.P.**  
Associate Professor of Systematic Theology  
Director of Master of Arts in Theology Program

Recorded on September 9, 2021




Video of Session 1 <https://vimeo.com/605066690>

Fr. Robin gave us the foundations of our faith through a journey of revelations from Hebrew Scriptures, New Testament, Early Christian Theology, Vatican II (Dei Verbum , Gaudium et Spes, **Faith**), Aquinas and Revelation in other religions,

| Day | Passionist                       |
|-----|----------------------------------|
| 3   | LEE, John Michael                |
|     | PADINJARADATH, Sibi              |
| 5   | GUIVAS, Luis Daniel              |
| 9   | MCMILLAN, John                   |
| 10  | DELBROCCO, Enzo                  |
| 11  | VITALI, Theodore                 |
| 12  | PACHECO, Lionel                  |
| 14  | ROGERS, Joseph                   |
| 17  | MURPHY, William                  |
| 20  | ESPARZA-PEREZ, Hugo              |
| 23  | LABA, Gerald                     |
| 31  | PRICE, James                     |
|     | RODRIGUEZ HERNANDEZ, Carlos Luis |



Over 100 people watched this Zoom session. It was very interesting to see Passionist Priests, Bothers, Sisters, Associates and others who are interested in the Passionist charism.



**The Passionists**  
of Holy Cross Province  
and St. Paul of the Cross Province  
Office of Mission Effectiveness



## ANNOUNCEMENT

Holy Cross Province and St. Paul of the Cross Province are delighted to announce the launch of a new series of educational and formational opportunities throughout the year. Prayer, reflection and study are the central and constant tasks of our formation as Christians. Albert Einstein said, “Intellectual growth should commence at birth and only cease at death.” The apostle Peter wrote, “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity” 2 Peter 3:18. Growth in our spiritual lives is a biblical imperative. The expectation of Scripture isn’t that we grow old together, but that we grow in our faith together.

St. Paul of the Cross often referred to his whole-hearted commitment to on-going learning. To Fr. Paul Cerruti, his former spiritual director, St. Paul of the Cross, at age 47, wrote in 1741: “God, who chooses the weak and ignorant of this world, has deigned to give me some ability for learning... I have been engaged in studies to which I have made an effort to continue as much as possible.”

The goal of this complimentary *Passionist Family Formation e-Learning* (PFFeL) is to help deepen our understanding and appreciation of our Christian faith as a Passionist Family who keep our focus on the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Presentations will be offered by Passionists and other faculty at Catholic Theological Union. Having the experience and imagination of scholars and experts from Catholic Theological Union will help us deepen our faith and offers us a further opportunity to integrate the Passionist charism in our daily lives.

*Passionist Family Formation e-Learning* will be a cohesive course of six 90-minute sessions each year, offering a full perspective on scripture, spirituality and Catholic theology. Participants will be asked to commit to the entire set of six sessions. This program will supplement, not replace, any Passionist charism formation activities on the local level.

The sessions will be live, online (Zoom) and open to all lay and vowed Passionists of both American provinces. At the outset, the program foresees multi-year cycles, each cycle consisting of six 90-minute sessions per year (Fall through Spring). Each session will contain both presentation and Q&A periods. The sessions will be held on the second Thursday of the month as listed on the following page and will begin at 6:30 PM, Chicago time. There will be a Passionist host who will oversee the entire program, helping participants prepare for each session. The host will assist participants to integrate the specific topic with our Passionist spirituality.

Use this link to register: <https://form.jotform.com/212095360138148>. If you have any questions, contact Fr. Don Webber, CP, at [pffel2120@passionist.org](mailto:pffel2120@passionist.org). Looking forward to serving you with this special resource that will support and strengthen us in our mission as a Passionist Family.



*This program draws on Provinces' collaboration with Catholic Theological Union (CTU) in Chicago. Passionist seminarians have attended CTU since its beginning in 1968 and many Passionists have enjoyed sabbaticals there. Holy Cross Province has sponsored laity for a week at CTU for its Summer Institute in June and sponsored individuals who desire to pursue a CTU pastoral degree (Master of Arts in Ministry) for ministry in the Province. We look forward to these programs continuing, complemented by our new series of educational and formational opportunities.*

# Pope Francis Letter to our General Superior about “the Wisdom of the Cross in a Pluralistic World”



To Rev. Father **Joachim REGO**, C.P.

Superior General

of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ

I extend a cordial greeting to the participants in the International Theological Congress, which will take place at the Pontifical Lateran University from 21 to 24 September 2021, on the theme “The Wisdom of the Cross in a Pluralistic World”. This event is part of the Jubilee Celebrations for the Third Centenary of the foundation of the Passionist Congregation and aims to further study the current situation of the Cross within the framework of multiple contemporary contexts. In this sense, it corresponds to the desire of Saint Paul of the Cross to ensure that the Paschal Mystery, the centre of the Christian faith and the charism of the Passionist religious family, is proclaimed and disseminated in response to divine Charity, and that it addresses the expectations and hopes of the world.

The Apostle Paul speaks of the breadth, length, height, and depth of Christ's love (cf. *Eph* 3:18). Contemplating the Crucified One, we see every human dimension embraced by God's mercy. His kenotic and compassionate love touches, through the Cross, the four cardinal points and reaches the extremes of our human condition, joining in a mysterious way the vertical relationship with God and the horizontal relationship with humanity, in a fraternal union that the death of Jesus has definitively made universal.

The immense saving power unleashed by the weakness of the Cross reveals to theology the importance of an approach that knows how to combine the loftiness of reason with the humility of the heart. Before the Crucified One, theology is also invited to address the most fragile and concrete conditions of men and women and to set aside polemical methods and agendas, joyfully sharing the labor of study, and confidently seeking the precious seeds that the Word scatters amidst the jagged and sometimes contradictory plurality of cultures.

The Cross of the Lord, a source of salvation for people of every place and every time, is therefore vibrant and effective also and above all at a crossroads, such as the contemporary one, characterized by rapid and complex changes. Very appropriately, therefore, the Theological Congress aims to study the *Sapientia Crucis* in various contexts – such as the challenges of cultures, the promotion of humanism and interreligious dialogue, and the new scenarios of Evangelization – associating scientific reflection with a series of illustrations that attest to its beneficial impact in different areas.

Therefore, it is my hope that by promoting fruitful theological, cultural, and pastoral interactions, this initiative will contribute to a renewed understanding of contemporary challenges in light of the Wisdom of the Cross, in order to foster evangelization faithful to God's design and attentive to humanity. While offering my cordial best wishes for these days of study, I invoke the protection of the Holy Virgin and Saint Paul of the Cross, and I cordially impart to the speakers, organizers and those who take part in this important gathering the Apostolic Blessing, and I ask everyone to continue to pray for me.

Rome, St. John Lateran, 1 July 2021

Francis

# 1<sup>st</sup> day of the Congress *The Wisdom of the Cross in a pluralistic World*



## The Wisdom of the Cross in a pluralistic World

**INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL CONGRESS**

ROME, PONTIFICAL LATERAN UNIVERSITY FROM SEPTEMBER 21 TO 24, 2021

The Congress entitled, *"The Wisdom of the Cross in a pluralistic world"*, begins on **21 September 2021 at 9:00 AM** in the Aula Magna (main hall) of the Pontifical Lateran University. In-presence participation is possible as well as remotely via **livestreaming in English, Spanish and Italian**. The first event will be the **enthroning of the Crucifix**. This is a crucifix that dates to the 1700s and was used by St. Paul of the Cross, the Founder of the Passionists (1694-1775)\*.

After the prayer, the **message that the Pope** sent to the participants of the Congress will be read. Then **Cardinal João Braz de Avis**, Prefect of the Congregation for Consecrated Life and Institutes of Apostolic Life will greet the assembly of participants in presence and online.

This will be continued by the greeting of the Rector President of the Lateran University, **Prof. Vincenzo Buonomo**, followed by the presentation of **Fr. Fernando Taccone**, Director of the Congress. **Fr. Joachim Rego**, Superior General of the Congregation of the Passion, the sponsor of the Congress, will give the proslution on the theme *"The wisdom of the Cross-- the path to reconciliation in a pluralistic world"*.

After the break at 10:45 AM, Prof. **Antonio Pitta**, Pro-Rector of the Pontifical Lateran University, will give a presentation on the biblical aspect of the topic: *"The wisdom of the cross and the challenges of cultures."* The theological aspect of the same topic will be addressed by Prof. **Tracey**

**Rawland**, the University of Notre Dame, Australia. Due to anti-Covid restrictions, the professor will make her presentation via Zoom.

All the ceremonies and presentations during the morning will be live-streamed on the Youtube and Facebook channels of the site [www.passiochristi.org](http://www.passiochristi.org)

In the afternoon at 3:00 PM the **four language sections** (English, Spanish, French, Italian) will commence, each with a report and four communications. The four moderators and all the participants will meet at 5:30 PM in the general assembly for a round table discussion in which each group will share the content of the interventions during the group assemblies. The **round table** discussion, unlike the language groups, will be streamed in the three official languages (English, Spanish, Italian).



### \*The Crucifix of St. Paul of the Cross

The crucifix that will be enthroned in the Aula Magna of the Lateran University was a crucifix used by St. Paul of the Cross when he preached missions. It had a unique aspect of being able to be folded (arms and legs) and thus be placed in a case and easily transported. At the time for preaching about the Passion it was opened and brought to the pulpit and held before the preacher. An important part of the preaching about the Passion was the "dialogue" that took place between the preacher and the Crucified One.

**(LIVE)**  
STREAMING

Click here:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82363732707?pwd=VEsyVn-VSNmk2WVBYNittd20yK-2cwZz09>

and choose the language (Italian, English, Spanish), or go to Facebook Passiochristi.



[www.congressopassionista2021.eu](http://www.congressopassionista2021.eu)

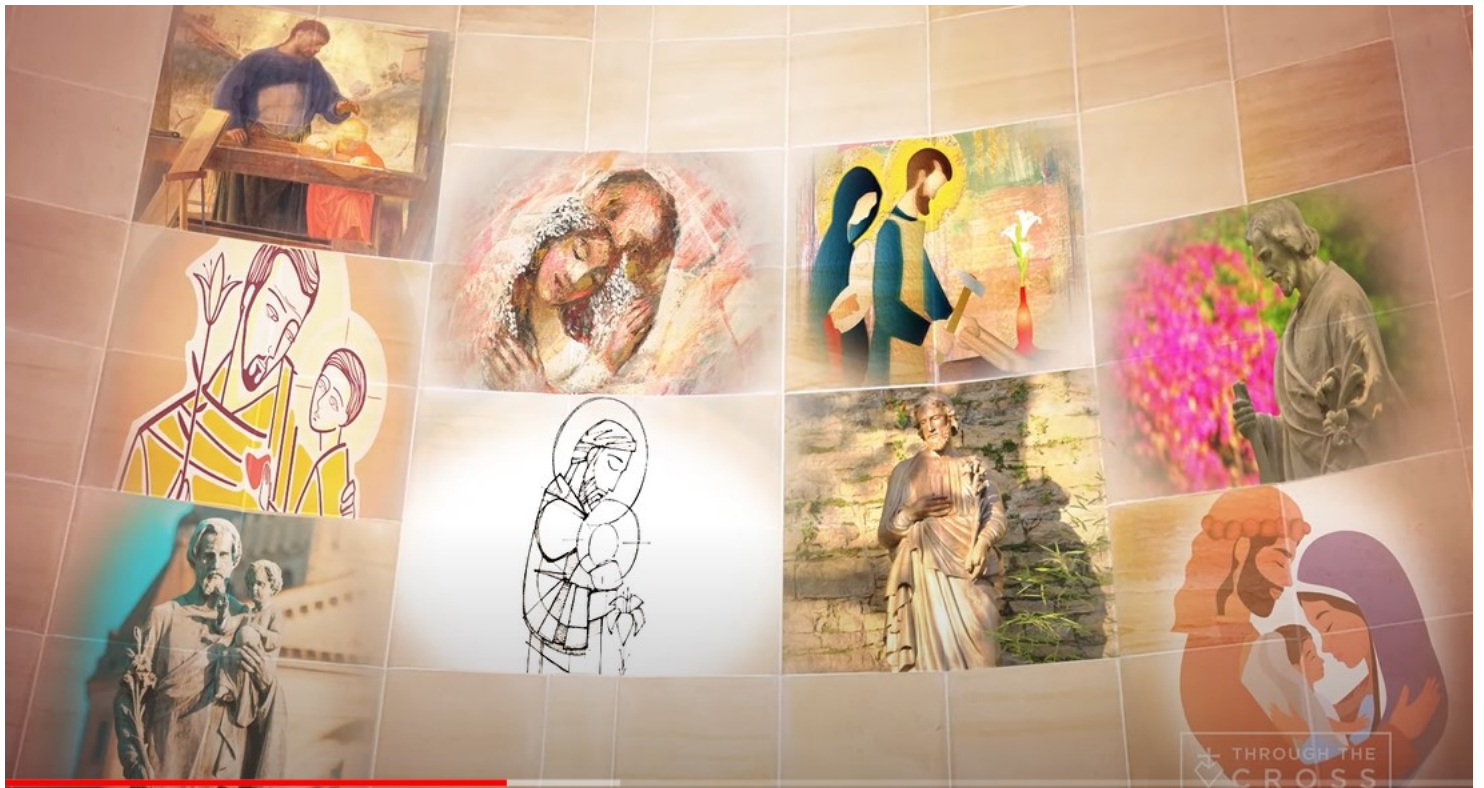
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# Novena to St. Joseph! - 9 Saturdays starting on Sept 18

Watch on our [Youtube channel](#) OR [our website](#)



Each Saturday is devoted to one of these 9 titles of St. Joseph

# Update from Fr. Rick in Haiti

Dear Friends

- 1 God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.
- 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way  
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
- 3 though its waters roar and foam  
and the mountains quake with their surging. [c (Psalm 46:1-3)]

As we slept under star stars in Les Cayes two nights ago, having led another caravan of medicines, supplies and building materials to the South,  
and while mosquitos ate us alive, the heavens were spectacular and the earth was all music.

God songs, sung with full vigor, were coming over the walls from the people sleeping on the streets and from the nearby Churches.

You can forget about mosquitos when you are looking at heaven and hearing its hymns.

We have started putting roofs over people's heads, wooden or iron frames with aluminum roofing.

Two of them were for some nuns in Aquin. One for a "convent" and one for a "clinic."

This community of Sisters knows psalm 46 real well. Their mother house and school in Riviere Froide collapsed in the quake of 2010 (that's how I met them),

Two of them have been victims of kidnapers. Five of them were in our St Luke COVID unit a few months ago, and two died there.

Now their convent and school, clinic and Church are heavily damaged.

They are women of strong faith. They are joyous. They danced when Domo and Cesar gave them tin roofs, in less than a day of welding.

Do you have doubt about their joy? Come and hop on my truck!

We stopped at Camp Perrins to resupply our medical teams in the area, and at the request of a friend who went to school there many years ago, to report on the damage to the Catholic Seminary called Mazenod.

My friend was very worried about how many fatalities there were, especially among the priests.

The place is totally destroyed, and I spoke with the priests there and discovered thankfully that only two people died in such destruction.

God rest their souls and console their families.

While talking to the priests, a very young man came out of nowhere and said to me "I go to your school."

By the way we said it, it was if he saw me as family, as an anchor. He somehow felt solid to see me.

I thought, if our schools can engender this kind of trust, we must be doing something right.

I said, "which school?"

He said, "In Tabarre, the Academy for Peace and Justice."

Pierre Louis then told me how he hurried back home from Port au Prince as soon as the ground stopped shaking.

He lives with his grandmother, the house is destroyed.

His whole small town (bouk) is destroyed.



I asked where he lived, and he said Picot. I asked if it was far, he said about 15 minutes into the mountain. So off we went.

We bandaged some wounded, visited the destroyed homes, and he seemed proud before his neighbors that were there.

A mom showed us her 5 year old daughter that had been under rubble up to her neck- gentle and careful hands dug her out. When I asked Pierre Louis about fatalities, he told me the Mambo (female voodoo practitioner) was having a ceremony in the peristil (temple) and the roof fell on them and killed the 39 people present.

I was thinking, how would I have handled all of this if I were a junior in high school. With all the tragedies in Port au Prince, and the failures of the county, how would I be motivated to study when in this country it seems like there is no tomorrow.

But whatever my questions were, they weren't his questions.

Pierre Louis thanked us for coming.

He asked for a prayer. He asked for help for his village.

He is ready for tomorrow, and he is full of the dreams he needs to get him there.

We have already started distributing construction materials broadly. His village in Picot is on the list for late this week.

God is also the refuge and strength of the "combit," the human armies that come together in Haiti for any momentous task.

The combits were so evidently busy since our last caravan to the south just days ago. They are breaking up the rubble in Las Cayes and Maniche by hand, hauling it away, piling up the twisted rebar to sell to the iron recyclers and exporters.

The Haitian people are not sitting around waiting for Godot.

So very creative and industrious, shelters are appearing and gardens being replanted. The God of life smiles.

Way up by the mountains near the peak called Makaya, in a village called La Pourcine, a call for help through friends of friends led us to find some helicopters to retrieve 11 wounded, and 11 family members to stay with them in Port au Prince.

Messages continued to come, looking for help to help get them out from under the cold rain.

They needed roofing materials. They are nearly unreachable even in ordinary circumstances.

We planned all kinds of ways to pull this off.

There is a mountain path from Beaumont, which is reachable by road, and then requiring eight hours on foot.

Only people can manage it, and not even mules because of the paths that wind through treacherous cliffs.

I tried to picture myself and the team trying to walk all those hours carrying 12 foot aluminum sheets.

We offered to try, but the mountain people sent back a message, it is treacherous for people not used to it.

That is definitely us.

Because contents of caravans are getting stolen all along the roads from Port au Prince to the south, we decided to buy the building materials for La Pourcine in Jeremy.

We would manage the broken bridge like we did last time: trucks on both sides of the bridge and crossing with the materials by hand.

The we would go up the mountain from Roseau with four wheel drive the trucks, through Voldrougues, up the muddy mountain road to Lion's market, and then park at Bois Sec (dry wood), which is the end of the road. Then we would haul the materials the rest of the three hours on foot and mule.

The trouble is the Bois Sec is full of bandits, so our last thing to plan was some kind of police escort from Jeremie.

Then the mountain people sent a message, on the day we were leaving.

Hold off! Heavy rains softened the mountain, and a mudslide between Bois Sec and La Pourcine had blocked passage. We would have to wait until they had at least three days of sun, to dig open that pass.

So were were on hold again - until today. Seems very likely now that a US helicopter will get the 500 sheets of roofing to the village within days.

The struggles to advance are blessed. We are hoping for good news.

The whole week's efforts were dampened Wednesday, when for a third time we had another kidnapped staff. The pit in our communal stomach, the extra worries for the victim being female, trying with big thumbs on a small phone to mobilize many levels of pressure on the kidnapers while in the south, even trying to get to their king (Iamor sans jour- "death with no date").

It is not only about the kidnapping of Marie. It is about the kidnapping of the dreams of all the Marie's in Haiti ,and turning their dreams to fear.

It's about leaving no choice to capable people except to flee the Haiti for shores that are better and safer for them and for their children.

The flight of the competent, the lucky, the traumatized.

A tightrope walk for three days, but thankfully Marie was released this morning unharmed.

Last night "Stainless", one of our construction workers, was less lucky. The gang where lives on Delmas is called Cache Dife (hidden fire). It was the gang leader's girlfriend's birthday yesterday, and the police decided to add their own fireworks to the party. In the shootout to capture the gang, people living in the area were not left unscathed. Stainless has 7 bullets in his extremities. He said he owes his life to a policeman who recognized him and called off the assault on him. He was presumed to be part of the gang, probably because he does not exactly look like a boyscout.

The death rattle is not just the sound a dying person makes with their throat as they fade away, or the grinding sound of an earthquake (in Creole they call that sound "godoogodoo").

The death rattle is also the macabre voice of Satan, vibrantly resonating out of the vocal cords of the fault line caused by the deadly sins. A convulsing earth is not the only way to violently shake the human family.

It's the best song Satan can come up with, a disgusting death rattle.

Believers have a better song by far. The Godsong.

This is the song that we must strive to keep alive at all costs, by adding our own voices to it.

Fr Rick Frechette CP,DO

Port au Prince

August 28, 2021

# Another Update from Fr. Rick in Haiti

Dear family and friends,

The last weekly update I sent was a strong attempt on my part to find a silver lining in many dark clouds,

I had hardly pushed the "send" button when another thunderhead roared at us, and threw lightening in all directions.

Marie Ange was kidnapped from our NPFS home for children called St Anne, the community made up of both disabled children and very small fully abled children.

Gunmen came over the wall, made their way across the roof of the pigpen (where we raise the pre Duvalier era Creole pig, to try to reintroduce it to the peasant farmers), and without effort, climbed down the ladder used for reaching the cisterns where we reuse water from our Tilapia farm to irrigate the fields.

It was 3 am.

They broke into the house with guns and "covid" masks (their eyes and upper faces were plainly visible), they terrorized the staff and children, and left with the pregnant Marie Ange- she also climbing up the same ladder at gunpoint, her feet like drumbeats on the roof over the heads of the pigs, and then down the wall.

This is how bad things have gotten.

We sat together in the pre-dawn hours trying to bring some consolation to everyone who was reeling, especially the children who were witnesses, and our dialogue was a pouring over the questions of how this could happen, how was it planned, who was involved, how will we save Marie Ange, and what will we do next for these children.

Maybe you have had the experience that sometimes helping suffering people (like earthquake victims), is an excellent distraction from your own problems.

Somehow the chemistry of what you are personally dealing with changes, when you lend a hand to someone else in need. This ancient practice of compassion for others from your own base of suffering brings both distance and healing.

And so we mobilized our next trip to the earthquake victims, staying tied together by phone and whatsapp, re-igniting our public protests and mobilizing again very high level actors to help Marie Ange.

We regrouped after every call from the kidnapers- but we did not forget the mountain people, who were spending miserable nights in cold rains.

As I have said before, numerous St Luke team are quite engaged daily in the south for the victims: the healthcare teams are expanded, and outreach is in progress to all affected families at the St Luke schools that we have along the fault line, with a lot of material help.

In the mountains above Petite Riviere de Nippes there are people who cannot be reached except on foot or mule.

We had a rendez-vous with a number of these people, and their mules, in Petite Riviere.

It was a long trip for them on mountain paths, and a long drive for us requiring, once again, the crossing of Martissant.

We had a number of tents for the people of the mountain. We have been avoiding tents and tarps, but it is not easy tying 12 foot aluminum sheets (which become guillotines if you lose control of them) onto mule backs, and harder still to

ie 16 foot lengths of 2x4' lumber.

Each tent is comprised of three large, heavy boxes.

We also had blankets, soap, and some clothing.  
Quite a load for a mule.

Our meeting point was the police station at Petite Riviere, to try to have a non-chaotic distribution, and the police were very nervous that bandits would appear at any moment and outnumber them.

It would have been easy to outnumber them: the police numbered two.

We had begun loading the mules, while at the same time we started our underground strategies to release Marie Ange (the public strategies were well in motion, including high level advice and important contacts from the US Embassy and good cooperation from the Haitian Judicial police.)

The ransom was very high at US \$100,000. We are, of course, known to have international funding sources.

Without being free to reveal too much, the underground strategies included involving a local vodou hougan of high rank, where some of the gang members attend ceremonies and dances, and so were known to him. He offered to include in the dances that night (in honor of a vodou "loa"), an order for liberation. Most of the vodou feasts parallel Catholic feasts, in this case, the September 8 celebration of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary.

We have a number of staff, even key staff, who grew up in the ghettos but never adopted the criminal behavior young people are forced into. They know all the language, the mentality, and they have the tools of ghetto survival- so they can walk straight into it all, but with a different heart.

"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. So be as cunning as serpents and as innocent as doves." (Mt 10:16)

Raphael is a total pro at this. He somehow managed to have a speaker phone meeting with the hierarchy of the kidnapers. They are a large, fierce, heavily armed gang called 400 Mawozo,

After a lot of twists and turns in the dialogue, (Kenson was introduced by Raphael into this unpleasant reality - so much so that Kenson later referred himself as the 401st mawozo, the one who would fight for the right among them), and by hooking what is left of their humanity, they agreed to release Marie Ange the next day, Feast of the Nativity of Mary, for no ransom. And they did.

Not only that, but Raphael and Kenson went into their territory to get her, as I waited on the dark and deserted road at the Tabarre bridge. Marie Ange was led out blind folded, and cried mightily when her mask was removed and she was in Kenson's embrace. They gave Raphael the phones they had stolen from NPFS staff, and the guns and phones they had stolen from the NPFS security. They told Raphael they will give him the phone numbers of the contacts of the insiders who were the so called "antennas" that enabled this kidnapping. All of this highly unusual. These are important inroads for us.

Raphael handed them an envelope. Even though they asked no ransom, Raphael thought it was advisable to give them some money, a "gesture", for reasons I can explain at a better and safer time. To avoid involving the two institutions in this (St Luke Foundation and NPH), I gave this money from earnings made by selling home made chocolate, hand roasted coffee, fresh milled sugar cane juice, tilapia, and honey from our hives.

Back for a moment to the distraction of being good neighbors.

When we loaded all the mules and they headed clumsily up the mountain, and we finished distributing to other people proposed by the local leader we went to Grande Ravine to see the Curé of the Catholic Parish, who I have known for many years since he was once the Curé of Kencoff where the "St Helene" childrens home is located. He showed us his fallen school and cracked Church, and told us about the 18 who died, members of his mountain chapels, as rolling boulders and sliding earth swallowed them alive while hard at work in their gardens.

May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace.

One of our next planned tasks now is to try to set up a temporary parish school in Grande Ravine so the kids can get back to school by the end of September.

When Raphael, Kenson and Marie Ange reached the Tabarre bridge, and I embraced Marie Ange, I could feel the the contradiction inherent in a moment of "freedom". The body is free but has rigidly encoded the experience of bondage, the heart and soul are not yet free, and this freedom will be hard won. The release is hardly the "happily ever after" part of the story. The tougher part is just beginning, for everyone involved.

These updates would be easier if I just reported that in the 4 weeks since the earthquake we invested over a quarter of a million dollars (of your money!) to help our suffering neighbors, through attention to their medical needs, provisions for daily living, and in getting a roof over their heads. Thank you all thanks to you.

But I see a lot of importance in sharing with you these life lessons also, and not just present power point summaries. It is important to witness to the power of faith, and to share the strategies that both free those in literal human bondage, as well as to lift up those who have been crushed by tragedy yet again.

The field of neuroscience is crossing a whole new threshold of fascinating discoveries, altering tremendously our understanding of the brain, the mind and thereby offering new cures for the traumatized brain.

We had been taught forever that the brain is fully developed at the end of puberty and could not change, except for a downward degeneration (accident, illness, age).

Now it is very evident that the brain changes often. Very often. Science can show this. And you and I show it. The reactions to life events, both agonies and ecstasies, provoke first chemical changes, then structural changes, then functional changes in the brain that tremendously impact our thinking, feeling and behavior.

The bad news is that the brain is physically, negatively changed by trauma and tragedy, by substance abuse, by physical abuse, verbal abuse, abuse of authority and bullying.

The "mind" is changed as well.

Continual stress (even from watching the news) causes real changes of "your mind." The area of your brain that induces a healthy fear becomes hyper-stimulated first chemically, then physically, then functionally until you live with dread.

At the same time, the part of your brain that analyzes what provokes your fear, helps you to stay focused, judges correctly, and helps you learn how to adapt, becomes dulled atrophied, to the detriment of these abilities.

Over time, your brain literally shrinks.

Like yourselves with you many personal, national and global issues, the people here in Haiti, including our leaders, are brought low by the constant threats to life, and the enormous stress of each blow.

Fear becomes highly energized, takes on its own life, feeds on your dreams, and has its untoward affects on the brain, the mind.

As if it weren't bad enough to be confronting bad things during waking hours, more and more staff are reporting nightmares: the daily reality breaks into their nightly imaginings and disturbs any hope for a good rest.

I mentioned that neuroscience is proposing new therapies.

But let's not forget the old ones.

There is ancient human wisdom to draw on at these times, from religious and secular realms.

What helps?

Prayer, fasting, caring for your neighbor by sacrificing something of yourself (like half your sandwich).

What helps?

Seeking out beauty every day- in children, in nature, in music, in treasured friends, in creating something from nothing. Do this deliberately.

What helps?

Thinking good things, speaking good things, doing good things even to your enemy, even to yourself (for most of us, we are our worse enemy).

What helps?

Seeking silence, breathing deeply, cultivating gratitude, cultivating grateful, mindful awareness of everything within you and around you.

What helps believers?

Doing all these while staying centered in God, in whom we live and move and have our being.

Stress will not be going away soon, if at all. There are ways to offset it.

St Paul calls the way "metanoia", literally meaning, "change your mind."

With right living, right thinking, right praying, here is the promise from the Psalms:

*"He (she) is like a tree*

*planted by streams of water*

*that yields its fruit in its season,*

*and its leaf does not wither.*

*And all that he (she) does shall prosper." (Ps 1:1-6)*

Thanks for you continued support, and continued prayers. Count on ours for you, too, in the face of your many challenges.

Fr Rick Frechette CP,DO

Port au Prince

September 13, 2021

# Passionist Mission in Haiti

By Fr. Hugo Esparza-Perez, C.P.



## PASSIONIST MISSION | HAITI



### GRACE AND BLEAKNESS *by Hugo, CP*

Jesus talks about the parable of the wheat that is invaded by enemy hands, who plant weeds among them. At the harvest, his angels will separate them. I must let weeds of violence; hunger and desperation grow too amid the field of barley, beauty, and compassion. This parable is tough to hear and abide by. This is what life has been like in Haiti for the past months.

The assassination of the president this past July was followed by an increase of price on basic food products, already a crisis that not many mention. Then we had a 7.2 earthquake in the southern horn of Haiti, followed by a Tropical Storm four days after the quake while millions of people were mourning their dead, without a roof over them or food on their plates. The Weeds seem to take root much faster in this Country. So much so, that the weeds and their despairing presence can confuse the heart and mind of more than a few. Past conversations I held with two different acquaintances, both with first-world privileges (advance education) left me flabbergasted. Both let me know that these tragedies, which give no break to the Haitian people, are because these beautiful and people have been consecrated to Satan. Yes, they said that the natural and political calamities of Haiti were at the fault of Haitians themselves, and as a punishment, because one or a group of Haitians, at more than one point in their history, consecrated this place to the power of Satan. What a poor religious and social formation these two individuals have, not to mention the disrespect. (continue on pg. 2)

SEPTEMBER 2021

#### IN THIS ISSUE

- + Fr. Julian Diez, CP
- + First Professions

#### SPPHAITI:



- + Solidarity with Haitian led organizations
- + Announcements

# Passionist

FR. JULIAN DIEZ GONZALEZ,

Father Julián Díez González, CP (Sacred Heart Province) is from Infiñillas, Northern Spain and has been a missionary in the lands of Central America for two decades: in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Chile. He is 59 years old, and he entered the Passionist Minor Seminary when he was only 12 years of old. He was ordained in 1991. He joined the Passionist Mission in Haiti in August. With permission of his Provincial he has come to accompany and reinforce our Mission in Haiti.



## PROFESSIONS



The province of St. Paul of the Cross has rejoiced in the commitment of our 3 newest profession.

Jonathan Ramos from Puerto Rico professed vows in Jamaica, NY in August. Adenald Fleury and Daniel Cadet from Haiti, together

with two Mexicans and one Dominican Novice, professed first vows in Queretaro, Mexico on the 4th of July. Both of them, Daniel and Adenald are studying English and awaiting their visa in order to go to the USA for further studies.

## MISSION

*(continued...)* I must admit that this explanation is very attractive. Especially, as you see the few kernels of hope wider in front of you. You do not need to deal with the biopolitical complexity of the Haitian people with this view. You do not need to think much or look beyond your nose. These individuals did the opposite of what Jesus was inviting his disciples to discern as they heard him set forth the allegory of the weeds and wheat.

The life of the disciple is to plant the Kingdom, fields of justice, truth, compassion, etc. More so, we are called to sustain the grace of redemption as we face the bleakness of our sin and the power of our accuser, Satan, fully displayed before us in the fruit of the weeds of corruption, the mendacity in Haitian Politics; neo-colonization, the not-too-invisible-hand of first world powers, interventionism; the arms industry, that makes a few millions of dollars by arming our thugs and police, at the same time; and hunger, sustained by intermediaries who raise the price of the basic food the poor can afford.

Beyond the politics in Haiti, the violence of the Country has hit close to home. One of our lab technicians was kidnapped as she was driving home about a month ago. No less than a few weeks after, a young wife, mother of two, six months pregnant, and leader of the Orphanage next to our office and pastoral center was kidnapped in the middle of the night. 25 armed gangsters disarmed all four security guards and entered the orphanage where 30 children live. After difficult and sensitive negotiations, with those who care for the wheat and with those who work close to those who plant the weeds, the young pregnant leader was freed unharmed.

The lab technician is back to her necessary and very important work at St. Damien's Hospital. Our young mother and leader went back to comfort her other 30 babies at the orphanage right after she was free from abduction. These are not the fruits of a people who supposedly have been consecrated to the power of darkness. These are fruits of the Reigning of all that is good and true!

As we plant the fields of the reigning of God, in peoples hearts, ours, first of all, we must have the moral and spiritual stamina to sustain our mission while the weeds throw their shade and, at times, as they discourage our feeble hearts and minds. But, we will fear no evil, for justice belongs to God!



## SANT PASTORAL PASYONIS (SPPHAITI)



SPPHAITI'S MISSION:  
**TO SERVE  
TO EMPOWER  
TO UPLIFT**

[WWW.SPPHAITI.COM](http://WWW.SPPHAITI.COM)

Uplifting our community implies the task of creating friendships with neighboring organizations that are close to our mission. These friendships have developed slowly and with a lot of mutual respect.

One of this friendship is with a group of recent university graduates that want to serve their community by putting their talents to work. These group of young enthusiast have come together to create BIWOTEK, a vocational school. Since they did not have a physical place to to begin SPPHAITI partnered with them in order pushed them along the dream they are pursuing. So far, they have 25 students who are in their Driving School and Electrical Trade Program.

Along with BIWOTEK we are partnering with a middle school called Communataire de la Charite. They generously opened their classrooms for our adult education program where we had 25 adults who are learning how to read in write. La Charite is in great need of some reparations.



Through the help of Br. Luis Daniel, CP, who spent six months in Haiti, we are fundraising to fix the bathrooms for the students and teachers and we will fix the roof on one of the wings of the school.

## 2nd Anniversary of our Adult Education Program (Akademy SPP)



This is Jeanita. She is a 32-year-old mother of 2 who was not able to go to school as a child. She came from a numerous family and there was not enough money for her to begin basic schooling at a young age. As she grew up, she felt shame as she felt inadequate with it came to reading or writing. Life taught her how to do basic math in order to survive.

Two years ago she was motivated by one of our university interns who teach at our Adult Ed. Program to join. Jeanita refused. She was afraid of sitting in a big crowd of people. When she found out that our classrooms keep no more than 10 students she decided to give our program a chance.



During our anniversary celebration, Jeanita was overjoyed and showed everyone her national identification card. She

boasted because she no longer had to write an X where it asked for a signature. She wrote her full name and the I.D. card has become a trophy and sign of her capacity and future possibilities.

You can help us walk with others like Janita. With \$1,500 USD a year we can provide formation and a stipend to our University Interns who teach at our Adult Ed. Program, Akademy SPPHaiti.



**SPPHAITI'S  
VISION:  
MANY  
HANDS,  
ONE  
HEART!**

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# Asian-American Catholics

by ROBERT E. CARBONNEAU, CP

We want to announce the following to the vowed members of the province and associated with our ministries. Fr. Rob Carbonneau, C.P. has just published a book chapter which is attached as a part of this newsletter::

Robert E. Carbonneau, C.P. "Asian-American Catholics" in *The Cambridge Companion To American Catholicism*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 307-324.

Content of the article is an overview of the Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean and Filipino Catholic experience in the United States.

Fr. Rob wrote the following about this article.

In 2018 I was asked to write this book chapter which was to be done in a manner so that it can be easily read by college students and the educated public.

Because this was a synthetic project: it combined various population groupings, it was not easy to write. As I dug into this I became more aware of the levels of racism against Asian Americans. While this historical fact had been on my radar, I was humbled by the intensity of sorrow Asians have experienced. Likewise writing this essay provided me inspiration as to the Asian stamina of faith.

On a more personal note. Growing up as an East coast Catholic meant that the West coast Catholic and overall cultural experience was so foreign in my life and education. Completion of this article, especially with the helpful editors, reminded me of how much I still have had to learn in life. Of course I am most thankful that I had the opportunity to be a scholar at The Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History at the University of San Francisco and serve as the Executive Director of the US Catholic China Bureau, now known as the US China Catholic Association and live on the West coast. Indeed, this gave me the resolve to research this topic with some confidence.

All the same, this essay did prove to be a challenge to write. I had to determine how to push through this uncomfortable history in order to make it an inviting and compassionate history. Given all that has happened to all of us worldwide, I hope this essay helps offer to us a window into our personal history: how we might walk and understand the bricks in the road of life that we travel and when necessary seek healing.

However, people who might wish more information on the book chapter might reach out to me at [passionistarchives@gmail.com](mailto:passionistarchives@gmail.com) Please visit the Passionist Historical Archives website at [www.passionistarchives.org](http://www.passionistarchives.org)

Thank you

Father Rob Carbonneau, C.P., Ph.D.

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## 17 Asian-American Catholics

ROBERT E. CARBONNEAU, CP

In November 2000, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued a pastoral letter, *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity*, which reiterated the fact that the growth of the Catholic Church in the United States was greatly dependent upon immigrants from “many races and cultures.”<sup>1</sup> In looking at the changing face of the US Catholic population, it recognized the increasing presence of Asian and Pacific Island Catholics, a community that has been largely invisible within the history of American Catholicism. Awareness of the growing Asian Catholic population prompted the bishops the following year to issue *Asian and Pacific Presence: Harmony in Faith*, a statement that more clearly acknowledged their presence in the church. Noting that “Christ Was Born in Asia,” the document encouraged a fuller appreciation of the gifts and contributions of Asian and Pacific peoples to the life of the church and acknowledged the need to respond with a “welcoming spirit.”<sup>2</sup> A companion statement in 2018, *Encountering Christ in Harmony: A Pastoral Response to Our Asian and Pacific Island Brothers and Sisters*, laid out a national pastoral plan for Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in the United States. The product of the work of the bishops’ Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs, the report recognized the “richness of the spiritual and cultural backgrounds” that Asian and Pacific Island Catholics bring to the church and their contributions to the faith.<sup>3</sup> Taken together, these pastoral statements draw attention to two key themes, *presence* and *faith*, that have been central to the Asian-American Catholic experience.

<sup>1</sup> *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> *Asian and Pacific Presence: Harmony in Faith* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> *Encountering Christ in Harmony: A Pastoral Response to Our Asian and Pacific Island Brothers and Sisters* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2018), 3.

This chapter will focus on the history and experience of Asian Catholics in the church in the United States.<sup>4</sup> The first part of this article describes developments during the early twentieth century, focusing on Chinese and Japanese Catholics who lived primarily on the West Coast. Evangelization and outreach ministry undertaken at this time by religious congregations in conjunction with ecclesial leadership and laity were sometimes limited by existing prejudices. The second section of the chapter concentrates on the post-1965 period, a time marked by changes in immigration law, civil rights law, and Catholic renewal amid the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). This period was also characterized by increased diversity within the Asian-American Catholic population as evidenced by the growth of the Filipino, Korean, and Vietnamese communities. These new arrivals gave rise to diversified faith experiences witnessed in parishes and dioceses, where they also began to cultivate networks and establish leadership roles. Asian-American Catholicism today is the subject of the third section of the chapter and will include a discussion of devotional life, cultural practices, and new theological ideas. Across these three periods, the history of Asian-American Catholics calls attention to transnational influences within Catholicism and the ongoing struggle to recognize and respect diversity within the multicultural church.

#### CHINESE AND JAPANESE CATHOLICS BEFORE 1960

When histories of Catholicism in the United States speak of the era of the "Immigrant Church," the discussion tends to focus almost exclusively on Irish, German, Italian, Polish, and other European arrivals who flocked to American shores from the mid-nineteenth century through the opening decades of the twentieth. The Catholic historical narrative rarely acknowledges the presence of Asian immigrants and their encounters with or contributions to the church in the United States during this period. Although their numbers were small, an accurate account of immigrant-era Catholicism needs to recognize the experience of Asian Americans, who worked to establish themselves in the United States despite obstacles and hardship, including those they faced

within the church that lacked the experience and personnel needed to minister effectively to them.

As Chinese immigration to the United States surged in the wake of the California Gold Rush and the lure of jobs related to the construction of the transcontinental railroad, church leaders on the west coast made some limited effort to provide for their spiritual care. During the early 1870s, the archbishop of San Francisco, whose diocese covered the northern half of the state at that time, wrote to the Jesuits and other religious orders in an effort to procure a priest who could care for the spiritual needs of the Chinese community. At the same time, however, many Catholics, including members of the clergy, viewed the Chinese as an inferior race and joined in the growing chorus of anti-Chinese nativism. They expressed little confidence in the prospect of converting the Chinese to Christianity.<sup>5</sup> Such views helped fuel the anti-Chinese backlash that led to the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, a federal law that severely limited further Chinese immigration. The law was renewed in 1892 and made permanent in 1902.

Since very few nineteenth-century Chinese immigrants were Catholic and most lacked previous encounters with the faith, ministering to them proved a challenging prospect. When efforts began to take shape during the early twentieth century, church leaders often relied on the efforts of religious orders with experience in missionary work. In San Francisco, the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle, known familiarly as the Paulists, made an effort to reach out to the large Chinese population living in the vicinity of the parish they staffed, Old St. Mary's. There, in 1903, they established the first Catholic mission in the United States, which later grew to include a parochial school and a Chinese language school. In New York, the Salesians assigned to the Church of the Transfiguration in lower Manhattan likewise worked to minister to the Chinese within the district. They replaced the former pastor who railed against the "Oriental" invasion of his parish and complained about being "kept awake at night . . . by the noise of these Mongolians . . . [and] the clatter of their tongues."<sup>6</sup> While not all shared his intemperate views, there remained a common

<sup>4</sup> In all three statements, Asian and Pacific Islanders was the inclusive population. From the start, however, an editorial decision was made that this article should concentrate on Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, and Korean Catholics in the United States.

<sup>5</sup> "Father James Bouchard, SJ, 'White Man or Chinaman - Which?' 1873" and "Archbishop Joseph S. Alemany Requests Assistance with the Chinese Apostolate in San Francisco, 1871, 1874," in *Keeping Faith: European and Asian Catholic Immigrants*, ed. Jeffrey M. Burns, Ellen Skerrett, and Joseph M. White (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 232-235.

<sup>6</sup> Peter P. McLoughlin, *Father Tom: Life and Lectures of Rev. Thomas P. McLoughlin* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919), 83.

sentiment within the church that ministry to the Chinese remained difficult "on account of the[ir] dissimilarity of race, the natural reticence of the Chinese character, the persistence of the age-long Oriental customs, and finally, or rather principally, because of the indifference of white people."

Gradually, as early ministerial efforts bore fruit, converts within the Chinese community joined in the work of evangelization. At St. Mary's Chinese Mission in San Francisco, lay catechists helped to meet the leadership and layty were sometimes limited by existing regulations. The second secretary of the chapter explicated on the post-1965 period, a time marked by changes in immigration law, civil rights providing religious instruction to recent converts and serving as an interpreter for the pastor as he made sick calls and conducted home visits. Lay catechists also assisted at liturgies by "preaching our messages, announcements and Gospel sermons to the assembly and to the by the growth of the Filipino, Korean, and Vietnamese communities. These new arrivals gave rise to diversified faith experiences witnessed in parishes and dioceses, where they also began to cultivate networks and establish leadership roles. Asian-American Catholicism today is come together to address common concerns and promote greater understanding of their shared faith.

In many ways, Japanese Catholics followed a trajectory very similar to that of their Chinese counterparts during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Very few were born into Catholicism and the ongoing struggle to recognize and respect diversity within the multicultural church. The first official missions to the Japanese were established in San Francisco and Los Angeles during the early 1900s, partly in response to demands from the handful of Japanese Catholics living in those regions. In 1912, Francis Risabuto, a convert, sent a letter to Archbishop Patrick of the parish of St. Ignace asking him to inquire into the health of the more than 80,000 Japanese souls in California, noting that many of them were fleeing to American shores from the mid-nineteenth century through the ongoing struggle. The following year, a small Japanese mission center was established in the city through the efforts of Father Albert Breton, a French-born missionary who had served in Japan for several years following his ordination in 1905. Breton later turned the mission over to the Jesuits, so that he could concentrate on the one he had established the preceding year in Los Angeles. Although the mission shared many of the same hallmarks as regular United States despite obstacles and hardship, including those they faced parish life - from sacramental ministry and religious education to

\* In all three statements, Asian and Pacific Islanders was the inclusive population.

7 "Father Bradley's Mission among the Chinese," *The Monitor*, November 26, 1915.

8 "Chinese Ministry in San Francisco, 1905," in *Keeping Faith*, 227-28.

fundraising events and social and cultural activities - to outsiders it could seem like a decidedly foreign enterprise, one more akin to the church's work in the overseas missions. One article from 1918, for instance, noted the strangeness of finding "a mission to the heathen established in this city, the heart of a great city like San Francisco. Such views indicate that in the eyes of many observers it would take time for the Japanese to come to be seen as either fully Catholic or fully American."

the views of the Catholic missionary activity among the Japanese developed in the 1900s and 1920s, concerns about assimilation and other religious orders to assist churches or missions. In the Angeles, for instance, Bishop John Cantwell actively promoted the Americanization of his diverse flock and insisted that the Japanese converts conform to an individual way and religious matters. He invited Maryknoll sisters to replace the Japanese women that Father Breton had recruited to work among the Japanese population, believing the American-born sisters were better suited to the task of assisting Japanese Catholics fit assimilation. The law that severely limited further Chinese immigration. The law was renewed in 1902 and made permanent in 1904.

Since very few nineteenth-century Chinese immigrants were Catholic and most lacked previous encounters with the faith, ministering to them proved a challenging prospect. When efforts began to take shape during the early twentieth century, church leaders often relied on the efforts of religious orders with experience in missionary work. In San Francisco, the Missionary Society of St. Paul, the Apostle, known primarily as the Paulists, made an effort to reach out to the large Chinese population living in the vicinity of the parish they staffed, relocated to distant camps. Among them was Father Leo Lidesar, a Maryknoll priest, who moved near to the camp in Minidoka, Idaho, a mission in the United States, which later grew to include a parochial school and a Chinese language school. In New York, the Salesians assigned to such research in the Lower Manhattan

No degree of assimilation, however, would protect Japanese Catholics from scrutiny during World War II, when they and other Japanese Americans on the Pacific coast were forcibly removed to internment camps. In some cases, pastors found their entire congregations assigned to such research in the Lower Manhattan. Like others worked to minister to the Chinese within the district. They replaced spiritual care. Those interned also did their part to maintain the rhythms of religious community by conducting catechism classes for their children, hosting evening study groups for adults, and organizing meetings of the Holy Name Society, Legion of Mary, and other associations.

"Father James Bouchard, SJ, 'White Men or Chinaman - Which?' 1871," and "Archbishop Joseph M. Althaus Requests Assistance with the Chinese Apostolate in San Francisco, 1871, 1874," in *Keeping Faith: European and Asian Catholic Immigration*, ed. John E. Heil, Ethen Skerrett, and Joseph M. White (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 132-33.

10 Michael E. Eng, SJ, "Buddhism, Plummings on Our American Catholicity: Contested Ministry to Japanese Immigrants in Los Angeles, 1912-1925," *U.S. Catholic* Peter F. Donovan, *CP*, 2013, 167-168, 169-170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

11 Peter F. Donovan, *CP*, 2013, 167-168, 169-170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

Recognizing the injustice of the government's action, a handful of church leaders spoke out in defense of Japanese Americans. Most notably, Bishop Gerald Shaughnessy of Seattle, in a pastoral statement that he ordered to be read at all masses, urged Catholics to "embrace our fellow American citizens of Japanese extraction in a special bond of charity," emphasizing that they are "no less claimants of true American citizenship and of all rights thereunder."<sup>11</sup> Overall, however, the Catholic response to internment was muted. Most church members failed to recognize that fellow Catholics were among those affected, a reality that reflected the fact that Japanese and other Asian-American Catholics remained largely invisible to their coreligionists at this time.

#### THE POST-1965 ERA

The 1960s ushered in a new era in the history of Asian-American Catholicism. The passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 (also known as the Hart-Cellar Act) ended discrimination based on national origin and thus effectively abolished the restrictions that had been put in place by the 1924 Immigration Act and other exclusionary immigration policies. This legislative reform opened the nation's doors to a new wave of Asian immigration from more diverse national origins. Among these newcomers were large numbers of Filipinos, Vietnamese, and Koreans, each of which had sizable Catholic populations. Their growing presence in the United States would coincide with the implementation of the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, which encouraged greater respect for cultural-religious customs and authorized liturgical renewal that would invigorate the public expression of Asian-American Catholicism in the decades ahead.

While the growing diversity of the Asian-American Catholic population made them a more visible presence within the church, it also drew attention to the differences present within and among these communities. Taken as a whole, Asian-American Catholics during this period experienced many of the same collective challenges, including the struggle to establish communities of faith in their new country and to gain recognition from church officials. Yet their experiences were also shaped by their own unique national circumstances and distinctive histories. A closer examination of the Filipino, Vietnamese, and Korean experience reminds us of the need to avoid lumping these groups

<sup>11</sup> "Catholicism at Minidoka Internment Camp," in *Keeping Faith*, 256-262.

together indistinguishably, yet also helps us understand the various trends and transformations common to the wider Asian-American Catholic population.

Within this new wave of Asian immigration, Filipinos comprised the single largest group of arrivals, adding to a presence in the United States that dates back to the late nineteenth century, with vibrant communities in California, Hawaii, and other states. Although they faced many of the same barriers to immigration as other groups, their colonial history distinguished them from other Asian populations in two significant ways. First, they came from a country that was predominantly Catholic, a legacy of Spanish colonial rule and missionary activity dating back to the sixteenth century. Second, they had established ties to the United States dating back to the end of the Spanish-American War, when the Philippines came under US control. Their post-1965 migrations built upon these earlier pathways that had been put in place by the United States, including opportunities for citizenship granted to those who enlisted in the military.

As their numbers increased in the post-1965 period, Filipinos struggled against earlier patterns of discrimination. During the 1920s, for instance, newly arrived Filipino Catholics in greater Los Angeles found themselves labeled as part of the "immigrant problem" that was being voiced locally and across the nation.<sup>12</sup> They also faced neglect within the church. Only when confronted by government reports of the civil rights abuses and economic injustice that Filipinos suffered did bishops like San Francisco's Archbishop John J. Mitty take heed of their plight. Responding in 1956 to Vatican concerns that the spiritual needs of Filipino immigrants were being ignored, he surveyed his priests to determine what efforts were being made to minister to Filipinos in the diocese, finding pockets of vibrancy like the outreach being done by the Franciscans among Filipinos and other Spanish-speaking farmworkers in the area around Stockton. Unfortunately, such efforts were relatively rare. They also tended to be guided by paternalist assumptions and be dismissive of traditional devotions and other folk practices.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Kathleen Garces-Foley, "From the Melting Pot to the Multicultural Table: Filipino Catholics in Los Angeles," *American Catholic Studies* 20 (Spring 2009): 27-53.

<sup>13</sup> "Report on Filipinos in San Francisco, 1941-1942" and "Report on Filipinos in Stockton, California, 1956," in *Keeping Faith*, 266-272. See also Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, *Little Manila Is in the Heart: The Making of the Filipino/American Community in Stockton, California* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), ch. 5.

Recognition of Filipino presence in the church increased as they gained a stronger foothold in parishes and pressed for greater recognition and respect from pastors and other church leaders. Drawing upon strong social connections rooted in the historic legacy of the *barangay*, or village association, they came together to advocate for their needs. While some looked to Filipino priests to speak on behalf of the community, they also cultivated lay leadership. In Los Angeles, the missionary Columban Fathers working in Los Angeles boasted in 1951 that their parish possessed the "most successfully run organization of any kind among Filipinos in the US, whether religious, civic, or political."<sup>14</sup> But with the growth of the Filipino population, questions arose over how best to minister to their needs. While some advocated for separate parishes or dedicated Filipino ministries, others, including some Filipino leaders themselves, argued that efforts should be made to enter the mainstream of American Catholic life and that "special ministry to Filipinos or . . . [the] formation of a Vicariate for Filipinos . . . would only serve to foment a spirit of isolationism, perpetuate differences, and delay the day when the Filipino Catholic will feel at home in an American Catholic community."<sup>15</sup> As a result, many Filipinos have chosen to become active in existing parishes, where they are one group among many joining together in worship. Others, though, have chosen deliberately to seek out "destination" parishes that serve their spiritual needs. In Philadelphia, for instance, Filipinos from across the region began flocking in the 1970s to two downtown parishes, St. Augustine and St. Peter, that welcomed them with special liturgies and an embrace of traditional Filipino devotions.<sup>16</sup>

The growth of the Vietnamese Catholic population in the United States was directly connected to the history of the Vietnam War (1955–1975), a conflict that resulted in massive internal displacement and a series of refugee crises. The Communist victory in Vietnam in 1975 set in process a series of relocations that would swell the ranks of Vietnamese Americans from 130,000 in 1975 to more than 600,000 in 1990. In addition to those who were evacuated in the immediate aftermath of the war, the United States also accepted a large number of "boat people," the peak number of whom

fled the country between 1978 and 1982.<sup>17</sup> Many came to the United States after enduring temporary homes in refugee camps in Thailand, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. Though initially scattered across the country by these resettlement efforts – many of them coordinated by local Catholic Charities organizations working in cooperation with the federal government – the Vietnamese gradually clustered in a number of major population centers, including Southern California, Louisiana, and Texas.

The legacy of war and displacement had profound implications for Vietnamese-American Catholics in the United States. As historian Tuan Hoang has written, it fostered an "exilic identity" that informed their beliefs and practices. They looked to their faith to cope with national loss and family separation, often through an emphasis on traditional devotions, obedience to papal authority, and other defining features of Catholic life in Vietnam. Their wartime experience also fueled a fervent anti-Communism that aligned them with Cold War Catholic attitudes in the United States.<sup>18</sup> While some integrated into American parishes, many Vietnamese Catholics sought to carve out religious space where they could preserve their language, culture, and traditions, advocating for their own parishes at a time when many dioceses in the United States had moved away from establishing ethnic parishes. In these efforts, members of the laity often took the lead in petitioning for rights and recognition and organizing local support. Such was the case in Port Arthur, Texas, when members of the refugee community petitioned the bishop of the Diocese of Beaumont for a parish of their own in 1976. Such actions marked a notable shift in the Vietnamese-American Catholic experience, sparking a movement toward "greater and more active involvement in church life" than was customary in Vietnam, where church affairs were "generally initiated, managed, and directed by the clergy."<sup>19</sup>

Yet even as lay involvement has grown among Vietnamese American Catholics, the community has gained distinction for the large number of religious vocations it has generated. In 2009, the US bishops reported that 6 percent of those ordained to the priesthood that year

<sup>14</sup> Angelyn Dries, OSF, *Be Centered in Christ and Not in Self: The Missionary Society of Saint Columban: The North American Story (1918–2018)* (Bloomington, IN: Ex Libris Corporation, 2017), 282–292.

<sup>15</sup> "Inquiry and Response on Filipino Ministry, 1980," in *Keeping Faith*, 273–274.

<sup>16</sup> Vivienne S. M. Angeles, *Filipino Catholic Communities in Philadelphia* (Harvard University Pluralism Project, 1998) at <http://pluralism.org>.

<sup>17</sup> Peter C. Phan, *Vietnamese-American Catholics* (New York: Paulist Press, 2005), 66–67.

<sup>18</sup> Tuan Hoang, "Ultramontanist, Nationalist, and the Fall of Saigon: Historicizing the Vietnamese American Catholic Experience," *American Catholic Studies* 130 (Spring 2019): 1–36.

<sup>19</sup> Carl L. Bankston, III, "Vietnamese-American Catholicism: Transplanted and Flourishing," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 18 (Winter 2000): 45.

were Vietnamese. Though estimates vary, some surveys indicate that by the early 2010s, more than 800 Vietnamese priests were serving in the United States, some as members of the diocesan clergy and others as part of religious communities like the Redemptorists and the Society of the Divine Word. In some dioceses, Vietnamese clergy, whether immigrant or first generation, comprise a significant portion of the priestly personnel, staffing Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese parishes alike. Catholic sisterhoods have also benefitted from these Vietnamese vocations, though most of these women tend to gravitate toward Vietnamese congregations, some of whom have sent sisters to the United States to receive their education. Some observers have even gone so far as to refer to the Vietnamese as the "New Irish," noting how their disproportionate number of vocations today parallels that of the Irish in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Questions remain, however, whether these vocational trends will continue in subsequent generations as members of the Vietnamese community assimilate more into the secular American mainstream.<sup>20</sup>

The issue of generational change has similarly been one of central concern to the Korean-American Catholic community, the third group that stands out as part of the post-1965 wave of Asian-American immigration. Although there had been waves of Korean immigration to the United States dating back to the start of the twentieth century, the influx would peak in the period between 1976 and 1990. A disproportionate number of these Korean immigrants were Christian, with Protestants substantially outnumbering Catholics, a trend reflective of Korea's overall religious demography. Many of these newcomers were seeking greater educational and economic opportunities, assisted by US immigration policies that promoted family reunification. Upon arrival, Korean Catholics tended to cluster in a handful of major metropolitan areas, including San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York, where they were ministered to by members of religious orders who had prior missionary experience in Korea. The Columban Fathers, for instance, were instrumental during the 1970s in establishing Korean ministries in Chicago, Seattle, and Southern California. As Korean parishes were

formed, many came to rely on priests from Korea sent to the United States on temporary assignment. As Mi-Kyoung Hwang explains, this arrangement has led to an interesting dynamic, in which "visiting priests stay for a few years before returning to their [home] dioceses, while parishioners continue to live in the United States and must navigate their faith journey while interacting with American culture and society."<sup>21</sup>

As the Korean-American Catholic population has grown, one of the most pressing pastoral concerns has been ensuring that the faith is passed down from one generation to the next. Members of the immigrant generation worry about declining rates of church membership among the American-born generation, which can result from either secularization or the shifting of religious affiliation to Protestant Korean congregations, many of which boast vibrant youth ministries.<sup>22</sup> Another source of generational tension emerges as church leaders debate whether ministerial efforts should focus on serving recent immigrants or catering to the needs of earlier arrivals who have become more settled in the United States. Efforts to adhere strictly to religious culture and practices from the homeland may appeal to the former group more than the latter. Priorities will vary depending on whether the population identifies as being an *immigrant* community or an *ethnic* community, and whether the goal of parish ministries is to support cultural distinctiveness or to help integrate newcomers into regular parish life. As part of the process of religious adjustment, these concerns speak to the realities faced by many other Catholic immigrant groups, both Asian and non-Asian alike.

With Asian Americans and other recent arrivals bringing greater diversity to the Catholic Church in the United States, their presence in parish and diocesan life has forced church leaders to reenvision how "ethnic ministries" operated. In the post-Vatican II era, dioceses moved away from the older models that emphasized the creation of distinct parishes or apostolates to serve each group, shifting instead toward the creation of multicultural ministry programs. As Kathleen Graces Foley explains, the multicultural model of parish ministry, which gained ground in the 1980s and 1990s, "emphasizes 'unity in diversity' and

<sup>20</sup> On vocation trends, see Jonathan Wiggins and Sr. Thu Do, "Shelter from the Storm: The Parish's Role in the Faith Life of Vietnamese American Catholics in the United States" (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, August 2019), <https://carl.georgetown.edu/VietnameseAmericanCatholics.pdf>. See also Tuan Hoang, "The Resettlement of Vietnamese Refugee Religious, Priests, and Seminarians in the United States, 1975-1977," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 37 (Summer 2019): 99-122.

<sup>21</sup> Mi-Kyoung Hwang, "Passover to Crossover," in *Reconciling Cultures and Generations: Reflections on Today's Church by Korean American Catholics*, ed. Simon C. Kim (Chicago: Paul Bechtold Library Publications, 2018), 64.

<sup>22</sup> Simon C. Kim, *Memory and Honor: Cultural and Generational Ministry with Korean American Communities* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010), 21.



rejects the cultural pluralist tendency toward separate ethnic ministries." Among the rationale has been a desire to counteract the insularity of ethnic ministries, with each group speaking narrowly for its own members, and promote "a voluntary encounter of cultures that leads to mutual appreciation and greater integration" at both the parish and the diocesan level. In Los Angeles, for instance, the archdiocese sponsored workshops on intercultural communication and cultural appreciation, and has held annual conferences on "Building Inclusive Communities" that seek to move individuals "beyond 'awareness' of the diversity in the community and develop an understanding and appreciation of culture, ethnicity, and other differences."<sup>33</sup> Although this shift has not been without its critics, it signals a rejection of the view that diversity is somehow a "problem" to be overcome. Rather, such efforts seek to promote integration across ethnic lines and foster greater respect for pluralism within the church.

#### LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

The growing Asian-American Catholic presence within the church in the United States has led to a demand for greater recognition within the institutional church and a formal voice in its decision-making structures. At the parish level, Asian-American Catholics often confront the stereotype that they are passive or reserved, and can sometimes feel like a "forgotten group." They recognize the need to cultivate leadership within the community to advocate for their interests and make parishes more sensitive to their traditions and practices, and see involvement in parish ministries as a way to raise cultural awareness and make their presence felt. Yet feelings of inclusion can vary dramatically across parishes and groups, depending on the size of the particular Asian-American population relative to the community as a whole. Filipinos, for instance, while often still minorities within their parishes, tend to possess greater visibility within the community and its ministries because of their relatively larger numbers.<sup>34</sup>

Asian-American clergy have similarly recognized the need to organize collectively to amplify their voice and influence within the church.

<sup>33</sup> Carces-Foley, "From the Melting Pot to the Multicultural Table," 48–49.

<sup>34</sup> Tricia C. Bruce, Jerry Z. Park, and Stephen M. Cherry, "Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in the United States: A Report Prepared for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Secretariat for Cultural Diversity in the Church" (October 2005), quotes on 61 and 45.

In 1983, the US bishops supported the formation of the North American Conference of Priests for Korean Ministry, a group dedicated to promoting "the grassroots ministries of clergy and lay leaders in nourishing the spiritual and cultural needs of Korean immigrants and subsequent generations of Korean American Catholics."<sup>35</sup> More recently, in 2011, the National Assembly of Filipino Priests Serving the Church in the USA was established to support Filipino priests in their ministry and promote greater collaboration among them. Such organizations mirror the formation of groups like the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, founded in 1968, or PADRES, an association for Mexican-American priests, founded in 1969, which sought to combat discrimination and influence policymaking within the church.

Other national organizations, conferences, and gatherings have likewise worked to promote pastoral and educational initiatives. Founded in 1978, the North American-Chinese Catholic Clergy, Religious, and Laity Association, for instance, has since 1981 coordinated the North American-Chinese Apostolate Convention. In 1989, representatives of American religious orders that had previously been involved in overseas missions to China founded the US Catholic China Bureau (later renamed the US-China Catholic Association), which works to educate American Catholics about the needs of the church in China and to promote rapport between the Catholic community on both sides of the Pacific. Another source of intercultural engagement has occurred as a result of the growing number of vowed Asian members within American Catholic religious congregations of men and women. Religious communities with international membership, in particular, have become advocates for cultural diversity within the church. The Society of the Divine Word, for instance, a missionary order founded in 1875, has in recent decades consciously incorporated respect for Asian-American culture as integral to the religious formation of its members. The Maryknoll Sisters, who accepted their first Asian vocation in 1927 and later established novitiates in China and the Philippines, have similarly come to embrace intercultural Catholicism as part of their community identity.<sup>36</sup>

One of the clearest signs of growing Asian-American presence within the US church and confirmation of their importance to the faith

<sup>35</sup> *Harmony in Faith: Korean American Catholics* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2015), 27–30.

<sup>36</sup> Cindy Yik-yi Chu, *The Maryknoll Sisters in Hong Kong, 1921–1969: In Love with the Chinese* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 26.

has been the appointment of Asian Catholics to positions of episcopal leadership. With his appointment as auxiliary bishop of San Francisco in 2003, Ignatius Wang became the first Asian-American member of the church hierarchy in the United States. That same year, Vietnamese-born Dominic Luong was named an auxiliary bishop for the Diocese of Orange, in Southern California. One year later, Oscar A. Solis became an auxiliary bishop of Los Angeles and the nation's first Filipino bishop. In 2017, he was named the bishop of Salt Lake City, making him the first Asian American to lead a diocese. Their presence in episcopal leadership has had a direct impact on the pastoral messaging and activities of the US bishop's conference. Bishop Solis, for example, as chair of the US bishops' Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs, has worked to implement the pastoral priorities laid out in the bishops' statements on Asian and Pacific Island Catholics of 2001 and 2018. The increased presence of members of their own communities within the clergy and hierarchy offers a hopeful sign for greater cultural understanding and sensitivity within the US church, especially in light of Asian-American Catholics' concern that the US church "forces them to be like everyone else" or that it judges them according to a romanticized view of Asians as "model minorities."<sup>27</sup>

#### DEVOTIONAL LIFE AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

As their presence in the United States has grown, one way that Asian-American Catholics have added a richness and vibrancy to the church has been through their strong devotional life and distinct cultural practices. In an effort to preserve and celebrate their heritage, they have brought to parish life a range of religious rituals and customs that celebrate the union of Catholic and Asian culture in unique and distinctive ways. But their practices have also reawakened debate within the church over the nature and limits of religious inculturation. As a result, the degree to which eastern and western religious cultures are compatible has become one of the major themes taken up by Asian-American theologians and pastoral leaders.

Across these groups, many maintain a fervent devotion to Mary, a figure who functions as a source of Catholic unity and identity for Asian-American Catholics, not only linking them together across their

ethnic and national lines, but also connecting them spiritually to the universal church and to the local church in their homelands. For those who came to the United States as immigrants and refugees, the memory of Marian prayers, rituals, and symbols from their respective homeland has often provided a source of solace, strength, and inspiration amid relocation and adaptation. Chinese-American Catholics, for instance, honor Our Lady of China, who is said to have appeared along with a fiery horseman (believed to be St. Michael) in Donglu village in Hebei, China, amid the Boxer Uprising (1899–1901) to protect local Christians from the soldiers. In thanksgiving, the local Chinese pastor commissioned a painting of Mary with the Christ Child dressed in golden imperial robes, a sign of her embrace of Chinese culture.

Marian devotion is equally strong among Filipino and Vietnamese Catholics, who have embraced her in various forms, both those of European origin – such as Our Lady of Fatima – and those distinct to their own native countries. For Filipinos, great honor is given to the Virgin of Antipolo, a wooden statue of Mary that accompanied the Spanish Governor-General Don Juan Niño de Tabora in 1626 on his voyage from Acapulco, Mexico, to the Philippines. Convinced that the Marian statue enabled him to survive storms and fire onboard, henceforth, as a sign of protection all ships traveling the route carried the Marian statue, which also became known as Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage. Among Vietnamese Catholics, distinct honor is given to Our Lady of La Vang, named for the site north of Huế, in Quãng Tri province, where Mary is believed to have appeared to the local population. Persecution led the Catholics to seek safety in the La Vang jungle, where under a banyan tree, while reciting the rosary, there occurred an apparition of a beautiful and radiant woman in white holding a baby. She announced her name as Blessed Mother, or *Đức Mẹ* in Vietnamese, and consoled them and made known she would answer their prayers.

While this devotional culture helps Asian-American Catholics maintain transnational connections and sustain distinctive national identities in a multicultural US Church, it has also helped to integrate them into American parish life. Like immigrant Catholics of earlier eras, Asian Catholics have worked to secure places of honor within their parishes for their statues, icons, and other religious symbols, and have established confraternities, sodalities, prayer groups, and other organizations to promote their own particular devotions. These efforts also foster a more intimate sense of community and belonging within parishes, helping members overcome the isolation and loneliness many encounter in an American church that can come across as cold and

<sup>27</sup> On these concerns, see Linh Hoang, OFM, "The Asian American Experience and Catholic Studies," in *The Catholic Studies Reader*, ed. James T. Fisher and Margaret M. McGuinness (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 295–296.

unwelcoming. Some of these groups are highly organized, and have helped Asian-American Catholics cultivate lay leadership and gain a voice in parish affairs. Devotional practices have also helped make Asian-American presence known on a national level, as can be seen with the Marian Days celebration in Carthage, Missouri. First held in 1978, this annual summer pilgrimage now brings together tens of thousands of Vietnamese Catholics from across the United States for four days of prayer and devotion, accompanied by a celebration of Vietnamese culture and heritage.

As the Asian-American Catholic population has grown, their religious practices have increasingly become an established part of the liturgical and devotional calendar in American parishes. Those with a strong Filipino presence, for instance, will often perform passion plays during Lent and gather on Easter morning for *Salubong*, a procession that commemorates when the resurrected Jesus met Mary, his mother. Religious preparation for Christmas includes *Simbang Gabi*, a nine-day series of masses, traditionally held at dawn or in the predawn hours. A few weeks later, on the third Sunday of January, Filipinos celebrate *Sinulog*, a popular cultural festival that celebrates the feast of the Santo Niño, or Christ Child. A growing number of American parishes have also come to celebrate the lunar new year alongside their Asian-American members, who view the holiday as an important time of family celebration.

At times, however, the growth of Asian-American presence within the church has rekindled debates over whether certain Asian cultural practices are compatible with Catholicism. Most prominent among them is the question of ancestor worship, an issue that can be traced all the way back to the Chinese Rites Controversy of the late 1600s when missionaries and church officials argued over whether Confucian rituals were religious or secular in nature and whether their practice could be tolerated without compromising Catholic teaching. Chinese, Vietnamese, and other Asian-American Catholics continue to grapple with the issue, which has led to ongoing negotiation between their cultural and religious identities. Despite objections on the part of some church leaders, defenders of these rituals of respect and gratitude for one's ancestors maintain that they mirror long-standing Catholic practices, like the honor given to the dead on All Souls' Day.

As they straddle East and West, Asian-American Catholics have brought an important voice to debates over interreligious dialogue and religious pluralism. One of the most prominent figures has been the Vietnamese-born priest and theologian, Peter Phan, a member of the

faculty of Georgetown University, who has served as past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America. He immigrated to the United States with his family in 1975 as part of the wave of wartime refugees. In his writings, he has drawn on his cultural background to advance arguments affirming the belief that the Holy Spirit is at work in non-Christian religions. But the concern that such views were at odds with official church teachings on the nature of salvation prompted doctrinal investigations by both Vatican officials and the US bishops.<sup>28</sup> While controversial, his work reflects a larger effort on the part of Catholic theologians and pastoral leaders to recognize the fluid dynamics of faith within and across cultures.

### CONCLUSION

While it may be too soon to gauge the full impact that Asian-American growth has had on US Catholicism, the example of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, points to the transformations that are already underway. A place of spiritual and symbolic importance for Catholics in the United States and host to many important national Catholic gatherings, the basilica pays tribute to Mary as she is known and honored by the many peoples who have made a home in the United States. While many of the images located throughout the space depict Mary as she is known to Catholics of European descent, several recent additions call attention to Asian-American presence in the church. In 2012, the Basilica blessed panels depicting Our Lady of Korea at Cana and Our Lady of the Korean Martyrs, which were received as gifts from the Korean-American community. That same year marked the tenth anniversary of the dedication of a mosaic honoring Mary, Our Lady of China, which depicts her in traditional Chinese attire. In the lower church, there are chapels to Our Lady of Antipolo and Our Lady of La Vang, which draw thousands of Filipino and Vietnamese visitors per year.

These sacred images and the space they claim are a testament to the faith and presence of Asian American in the US church. Like the statements issued by the US bishops cited at the start of this chapter, they remind us of the need to include Asian Americans more fully into the history of US Catholicism, one that recognizes their long-standing presence in the nation and their immense contributions to the faith. Our

<sup>28</sup> Peter C. Phan, *The Joy of Religious Pluralism: A Personal Journey* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017).

narratives need to be enriched through a greater appreciation for how hope, endurance of faith in local circumstance, leadership, and piety and devotion have been, and will remain into the future, a core experience for Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, and other Asian-American Catholics. Their story of confident presence and deep faith is essential to understand American Catholic history.

#### FURTHER READING

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# Update from Fr. Jim Oshea—new team member Helen Rhatigan



Office of the Provincial

## THE PASSIONISTS

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September 1, 2021

Dear Brothers, Associates and Friends,

I hope you had a good summer and a bit of relaxation and renewal! I want to introduce you to the new member of the Provincial team, **Ellen Rhatigan**. Effective September 1, 2021, Ellen will work directly with me as Provincial Assistant for Mission. Ellen brings a very strong background to this position. She has worked for the Diocese of Brooklyn for the past 15 years as Associate Director for Planning and Pastoral Support Specialist for Episcopal Vicars. She is a person greatly committed to the mission of the Church and has served that mission throughout her professional career. She holds a Master of Theology (St. John's University), a Master of Social Work (Hunter College) as well as an undergraduate degree in psychology (Fairfield University).



As you know, **Ana Raven**, who served as Provincial secretary, left her position a year ago and began to work with the Development Office. Due to budget considerations brought about by the COVID situation, we did not replace her. Despite continuing financial stress, we are now able to creatively bring on a person to strengthen our provincewide mission.

We are structuring Ellen's role using a form of 'role and cost sharing'. Practically, she will work with the Province 70% of her time and the additional 30% she will work with *Thomas Berry Place*. This arrangement will allow her skills to best be utilized for the Passionist mission, as well as offering some sharing of salary for both entities.

As we look forward to a significant year in preparation for the Provincial Chapter, we are pleased to welcome Ellen 'on-board' and promise her our prayers, support and mission. Her e-mail is [erhatigan@cproov.org](mailto:erhatigan@cproov.org).

In JXP,

Father Jim O'Shea, CP  
Provincial

1 de septiembre 2021

Queridos hermanos, asociados y amigos:

¡Espero que hayas tenido un buen verano y un poco de relajación y renovación! Quiero presentarles al nuevo miembro del equipo provincial, Ellen Rhatigan. A partir del 1 de septiembre de 2021, Ellen trabajará directamente conmigo como Asistente provincial para la misión. Ellen aporta una experiencia muy sólida a este puesto. Ha trabajado para la Diócesis de Brooklyn durante los últimos 15 años como Directora Asociada de Planificación y Especialista en Apoyo Pastoral para Vicarios Episcopales. Es una persona muy comprometida con la misión de la Iglesia y ha cumplido esa misión a lo largo de su carrera profesional. Tiene una maestría en teología (St. John's University), una maestría en trabajo social (Hunter College) y una licenciatura en psicología (Fairfield University).

Como saben, Ana Raven, quien se desempeñó como secretaria provincial, dejó su cargo hace un año y comenzó a trabajar con la Oficina de Fomento. Debido a consideraciones presupuestarias provocadas por la situación de COVID, no la reemplazamos. A pesar de las continuas tensiones financieras, ahora podemos incorporar creativamente a una persona para fortalecer nuestra misión en toda la provincia.

Estamos estructurando el rol de Ellen usando una forma de "participación en los costos y el rol". Prácticamente, trabajará con la provincia el 70% de su tiempo y el 30% adicional trabajará con Thomas Berry Place. Este arreglo permitirá que sus habilidades se utilicen mejor para la misión Pasionista, además de ofrecer una parte del salario compartido para ambas entidades.

Mientras esperamos un año significativo en la preparación del Capítulo Provincial, nos complace dar la bienvenida a Ellen "a bordo" y prometerle nuestras oraciones, apoyo y misión. Su correo electrónico es [erhatigan@cpprov.org](mailto:erhatigan@cpprov.org).

En JXP,

P. Jim O'Shea, CP  
Provincial