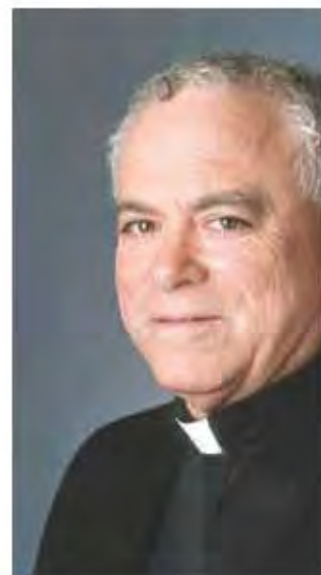


A Farewell Reflections on Our Time with Fr. Provincial Edward W. Schmidt, SJ



After six years as the provincial of the Chicago Province, Fr. Edward W. Schmidt, SJ, prepares for his next assignment. He has played a vital role in the life of the province and will be greatly missed. In what follows those who have worked closely with Fr. Schmidt share their thoughts and memories on his time as provincial.



To mark the 2005 opening of Chicago Jesuit Academy, Fr. Provincial Edward Schmidt, SJ, and Most Reverend John R. Manz, auxiliary bishop of Chicago, joined CJA administrators, faculty, and students. Shown here with many of the school's first class of nineteen fifth graders are Matthew Lynch, Catherine Cassidy, Bishop Manz, and Fr. Schmidt.

As provincial, Ed Schmidt offered gratitude to Joe and Cay Kearney and thousands of others who helped make possible Jesuit ministries, care for senior Jesuits, and Jesuits in formation. He welcomed the partnership of donors and friends with the Society of Jesus. Ed also offered new ministries—including St. Aloysius Gonzaga High School in Nairobi, Kenya; the Cincinnati Chapter of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps; Chicago Jesuit Academy, and Christ the King Jesuit College Preparatory School.

—Timothy Freeman
Provincial Assistant for Development
Chicago and Detroit Provinces

Chicago Jesuit Academy opened in 2005, the same year a number of Catholic schools in Chicago were closed. At a time when “No” would have been the easy and safe answer to a group of lay people’s requests to start an innovative Jesuit college prep middle school on Chicago’s West Side as a demonstration project in urban Catholic education, Fr. Schmidt had the courage and the creative vision to say, “Yes.” On behalf of our parents, students, and first alumni who will continue their studies at great high schools like Loyola Academy and Saint Ignatius College Prep this fall, thank you for the gift of Chicago Jesuit Academy, Fr. Schmidt. Your leadership reminds us that Fr. Anthony de Mello, SJ, was right: “Peace is only found in yes.”

—Catherine Cassidy, Vice-president of Operations and Development;
Matthew Lynch, President; and Matthew Botica, Board Chair
Chicago Jesuit Academy



Ed was uncommonly generous with and attentive to the men in formation of the Chicago Province. He was consistently present to the young men of the province at annual formation conferences at Christmastime. And many of the men in formation speak with deep gratitude for the rare opportunity that Ed provided them to make an eight-day retreat in the Holy Land under the direction of his eminence Carlo Cardinal Martini, SJ. Ed treasures the men in formation, not only as the future of the Chicago Province, but also as the personal sources of fresh perspective and revitalizing energy which they bring to the life of the Province in the present. The men in formation and I are deeply grateful for Ed's constant confidence, support, trust, and leadership.

—Fr. Ray Guiao, SJ
 Provincial Assistant for Formation
 Chicago and Detroit Provinces

The Jesuits in formation from the Chicago, Detroit, and Wisconsin Provinces gathered this year at the Colombiere Center in Clarkston, Michigan, for the first Triprovince Formation Gathering.



Chicago Province Jesuit Frs. Brad Schaeffer, Edward Schmidt, and Robert Geisinger enjoy a moment with newly elected Fr. General Adolfo Nicolás in the roof garden of the Jesuit Curia in Rome.

I first met Fr. Ed in 1993 when I was a rookie editor with Loyola Press and he was a seasoned pro helping to run *Company* magazine. The two Jesuit apostolates shared office space in those days, and I was immediately impressed with Ed's knowledge of the Society, his tales of travel to far-away places, and his well-crafted articles (which, he said, justified his travels). His joy at being a Jesuit and his love for communications have always been obvious. Which is why I always thought it'd be easy to get Ed to write a book. But he moved offices and I eventually moved on to other publishing houses, and somehow he got away. For the past four years, it has been a privilege to work with Fr. Ed again. From his work on the communications committee at General Congregation 35 to expanding the province communications office, from *Partners* articles to podcasts and public relations, he has sought to share the Good News. As Ed prepares for a well-deserved sabbatical, he says he's ready to write a book (books, even!). *Deo Gratias.*

—Jeremy Langford
 Provincial Assistant for Communications
 Chicago and Detroit Provinces

Having known Ed since he taught me Latin in the novitiate a long time ago and having worked alongside him these past six years in my assignments at the Jesuit Conference, at the Weston Jesuit Community, and during our 35th General Congregation, I've had the wonderful opportunity of seeing Ed's gifts come alive on behalf of the Society of Jesus. Whether functioning as a member of the full and active Jesuit Conference Board (US Provincials) or on one of its many committees, whether presenting the communications committee report in the aula or working within one of our Assistancy committee meetings, Ed always adds something to the conversation and, ultimately, helps shape a better discernment or decision. Ed Schmidt always comes at things from a different angle than most. He's one of the most creative Jesuits I know and when he sits back quietly and listens carefully to what's going on, when he integrates this into his amazing command of our history and tradition, and when he lets that native intelligence pull everything together, he's always able to present a thoughtful argument, raise a critical question, and tilt things just a bit so that an issue or decision is opened up from a fresh perspective. Add his humor to this mix alongside his great affection for the brethren, and you've got what Ed Schmidt has brought to the Society nationally and internationally. At the Conference, at Weston, and at the Congregation, Ed has been a wonderful gift to us and to me.

—Fr. Bradley Schaeffer, SJ
 Rector
 Weston Jesuit Community

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Fr. Schmidt has always been a passionate advocate for vocations in the Chicago Province. During my first year on the job (as I was busy learning the ropes), Fr. Schmidt suggested that we gather all the Jesuits together for an Area Day simply on the topic of vocation promotion: one in the Chicago area, one in the Cincinnati area. He encouraged me to “rally the troops” and inspire other Jesuits to encourage men to consider this way of life. The events were powerful, and Fr. Schmidt continues to offer support and generosity to me, in the promotion of Jesuit vocations. In the letters he writes to men accepted to the novitiate, Fr. Schmidt likes to focus in on the God-given “gifts” each man



brings to the service of the Church and God’s people. He usually closes his welcome letter with the words:

“I am confident that God will not only use all your gifts in your life and ministry as a Jesuit, but will also help you to discover and develop other ones along the way. May the Lord who began this good work in you bring it to completion.”

—Fr. Patrick Fairbanks, SJ
Provincial Assistant for Vocations
Chicago and Detroit Provinces



Fr. Edward Schmidt, SJ, stands with Michael White, a freshman from Christ the King Jesuit College Prep, and his parents, Pamela and Michael White.

I remember when Fr. Schmidt—pending Fr. General’s ultimate decision—approved the founding of Christ the King, the sixth Jesuit high school in the Chicago Province. As we discussed his thinking, two things became immediately clear in the conversation: First, he had prayed about it. Second, he showed enormous concern for me, as the probable new leader of this extraordinarily ambitious initiative. These two aspects of our conversation speak to the Ignatian character of Fr. Schmidt: He is prayerful and eager to find God’s direction. Second, he exhibits *cura personalis* (or “care for the person”) which St. Ignatius always urged his superiors to apply in their dealings with individual Jesuits. I am grateful—not only that Fr. Schmidt agreed to start Christ the King—I am grateful as well for his support for me and for all of us at the school. We will surely miss him!

—Fr. Christopher Devron, SJ
President
Christ the King Jesuit College Preparatory School in Chicago, Illinois



Former Fr. General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach (left) enjoys visiting with Jesuits Fr. Eric Knapp, Fr. Edward Schmidt, and Fr. Michael Christiana.

Napoleon Bonaparte said, “Ability is of little account without opportunity.” During his time as Provincial, Fr. Schmidt has recognized abilities in and provided opportunities for the Jesuits of the Chicago Province and our collaborators. Ed’s unique ability to see the talents in our brethren and imagine how those charisms can best be used for service of the Province and the larger Church have propelled the Province to initiate new ministries while renewing our more traditional apostolates in bold and creative ways. As a Province we have a greater understanding of our commitment to evangelization and the freedom to exercise that mission without restrictions. For this, we are a grateful Company of friends in the Lord.

—Fr. Eric Knapp, SJ
Pastor
St. Xavier Church in Cincinnati, Ohio



George Sullivan



“Sam” Schloemer

In 2006, Fr. Schmidt, SJ approved the start-up of Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) in Cincinnati. This was the second in the Chicago Province and sixteenth in the country. Since then, over 60 women and men in the Cincinnati and Chicago areas have ministered to the materially poor two days each week and have gathered monthly to reflect and share “Finding God in all Things” as Ignatius taught us through his spiritual exercises. From our first monthly gathering, we have opened our minds and hearts and shared some of our inner-most feelings and emotions by finding the face of Jesus in those to whom we minister, but as we often find out in such situations, the poor are really ministering to us. We appreciate the opportunity Fr. Schmidt has afforded us to open our hearts, reflect, and meditate on these experiences.

—George Sullivan
IVC Director
Chicago, Illinois

—G.R. “Sam” Schloemer
IVC Director
Cincinnati, Ohio