

by George Kearney



SETTING A NEW FIRE

EVANGELIZATION AND SOLIDARITY WITH THE POOR

This issue of *Partners*, which highlights Evangelization and Solidarity with the Poor, concludes a five-issue series on the Chicago Province's six apostolic priorities. The other priorities are: The Spiritual Exercises, Lay Collaboration, the Intellectual Apostolate, and the Ignatian Character of Our Schools. These priorities, developed in 2000 through much prayer and deliberation by Jesuits in the Province, serve as a guide for how best to utilize resources, both human and financial, in the coming millennium. At left, Dan Anderson and Katrina Duque participate in a liturgical dance presentation offered by Charis. At right, Jim Hasse visits with one of his neighbors on the front step at the Claver Jesuit Mission in Cincinnati.

In 1989 singer and songwriter Billy Joel released an album called *Storm Front* which contained the hit single, "We Didn't Start The Fire." The song, which hit #1 on the charts in December of that year, recited historical events from Harry Truman to the Cola Wars of the late 1980's.

The final verse, spanning from

1964-1989, includes the following: "Birth control, Ho Chi-Minh, Richard Nixon back again; Moonshot, Woodstock, Watergate, Punk Rock; Begin, Reagan, Palestine, Terror on the airline; Ayatollah's in Iran, Russians in Afghanistan; Wheel of Fortune, Sally Ride, heavy metal, suicide; Foreign debts, homeless vets, AIDS, Crack, Bernie Goetz; Hypodermics

on the shores, China's under marital law; Rock and Roller cola wars I can't take it any more." Lyrics for the chorus add: "We didn't start the fire. It was always burning since the world's been turning... but when we are gone, it will still burn on and on and on."

What, if anything, does Joel's song have to do with the work of the

Jesuits in the Chicago Province in 2003? Simple: this is precisely the world the Jesuits hope to change through their work. The Russians are no longer in Afghanistan. We are. Troubles continue to mount in Palestine. Terror on the airlines is real. Joel's words ring true: the fire burns on. But the Jesuits and their supporters are working to change this world, and this issue of *Partners* focuses on evangelization and solidarity with the poor, two of the means by which they hope to bring about change.

EVANGELIZATION

The mission of the Society of Jesus, stated in *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and their Complementary Norms*, is "participation in the total evangelizing mission of the Church which aims at the realization of the kingdom of God in the whole of human society, not only in the life to come, but also in this life." Jesuits believe this "realization" of God's presence in the world is the best way to bring about change.



"I see God move men on the retreats to faith and hope, says Wayne Richard of the Ignatian Spirituality Project retreats he's attended." Bill Creed, SJ (above), directs the Ignatian Spirituality Project.

The positive change this realization brings is evident in the experience of Wayne Richard, a participant and team leader in the Chicago Province's Ignatian Spirituality Project (ISP), an initiative created by Provincial Richard J. Baumann, SJ, and Fr. Bill Creed, SJ, designed to make the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius available and accessible to homeless and addicted men.

Wayne's parents died when he was a child. He was raised by his grandmother, who died when he was 13. His grandfather took him, and then passed him to family friends. "Under their roof," Wayne recalls, "I learned that people would hurt me for amusement, that people could and would be cruel, and that it was a normal part of life in the world."

Wayne eventually moved in with a friend and graduated from high school. He didn't have enough money for college and decided to take a year to figure out what to do next. In the year he learned how to ride a motorcycle, how to hotwire a car and how to smoke cocaine. "After several years I began to use more

and more, but not enough to recognize a problem. I depended on the drugs more and more to relieve the pain of living, the boredom of dead end jobs, and the lack of nurturing relationships in my life."

He found brief redemption when he fell in love with a woman and married her. The joy of this loving relationship soon gave way to anguish and frustration. "Cocaine was there," he says, and soon he was "out drugging" all night. The marriage failed and he hit the streets. He moved into a rat infested garage and continued his drug binge, only occasionally finding time to go to work. He was lost, high, homeless, and desperate. "I was ready to end my life. I sat under a traffic bridge with a gun in my mouth, tears in my eyes. Now my descent was complete. My final thought as I was about to squeeze the trigger was, 'God why wouldn't you love me?' And then it happened."

"In that instant it was as if time stood still and I heard a voice as clear as my own, 'Get up, leave here; there is something else for you to do.'" Wayne removed the gun, re-



"During the retreat I began to examine the continuous presence of God in my life," says Wayne Richard outside the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless. He directs Ignatian Spirituality Project retreats, because he wants "to bring the gift of these retreats to homeless men recovering from drugs and alcohol like myself."

turned to his garage, slept deeply, and in the morning called an addiction hotline. “I had to find freedom from the bondage of anger, bitterness, pity and ignorance of self. I desperately needed to live without the fear and loneliness that had guided my actions. And to do it I had to give God the lead.”

During his stay at a transitional center, Wayne attended a retreat presented by the Ignatian Spirituality Project. “During the retreat I began to examine the continuous presence of God in my life,” Wayne says. This was in 1999. Since then he’s stayed clean, gotten a job at the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, and helped lead more than a dozen ISP retreats. “I continue to go on retreat,” Wayne says, “because I see God move men on the retreats to faith and hope. I work to help continue bringing the gift of these retreats to homeless men recovering from drugs and alcohol like myself.”

This notion of realizing God’s presence in people and in the world, especially in places where it’s not apparent, is at the center of the evangelization efforts taking place across the Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus.

Weekend retreats at the Milford Spiritual Center on the grounds of the former Province novitiate in Milford, OH, are another example of how the Jesuits strive to make God’s presence in the world known.

“When we talk about evangelization, we’re talking about making more explicit and concrete God’s presence in the world,” says Dan Roche, Milford’s executive director. “These retreats help people quiet down and listen to what’s going on inside. That’s listening at a deeper level to how God is present in the world, and present in lived experience.”

Joe Kane, a 59-year-old Cincinnati attorney who started making retreats at Milford three years ago, says the retreat experience gives him “time



to think, and time to pray.” Joe Kane says retreats at Milford Spiritual Center give him “time to think and time to pray.” Jean Donnelly says the retreats she’s made have helped her “work on the things in my life that might get in the way of a closer relationship with God.” As a result of their positive experiences at Milford, Joe and Jean are giving some of their time back, serving on various boards and committees at the Spiritual Center.

to think, and time to pray.” Joe, who now makes an annual retreat and serves on Milford’s board, adds that the retreats offer “time to recognize how the Lord is working in our lives. It doesn’t have to be rolling thunder and burning bushes. There are so many little things the Lord is doing to help us along the way.”

Jean Donnelly, a CPA for a private investment firm in Cincinnati, shares Joe’s enthusiasm for the time she spends at Milford. “I treasure the opportunity to get away from all the distractions of life to focus on my relationship with God.” But Jean, who serves on Milford’s finance committee, is quick to point out that her retreat experience is not just about retreating from the world, but rather preparing to go back into it. “The retreat is full of tools for when you get back to the world. There are tools to better center oneself before and after prayer. The retreat, I’ve found, helps me work on the things in my life that might get in the way of a

closer relationship with God.”

Fr. John Dillon, SJ, executive director of Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House in Barrington, IL, says Bellarmine’s goal is to “provide an atmosphere that’s highly conducive to the graces God wants to give people.” Bellarmine, like Milford, seeks to do this by providing a peaceful setting for retreats. Tucked away on 80 acres in Chicago’s far northwest suburbs, it offers a clear break from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Though Bellarmine’s primary focus, like Milford’s, is on weekend retreats based on the Spiritual Exercises, it also offers an “Older is Okay” retreat. Directed by Fr. Ray Baumhart, SJ, this retreat helps people find paths to holiness in their daily lives as they grow older and their lives begin to change. Two Jesuit high schools, St. Ignatius and Cristo Rey, also use Bellarmine for their Kairos Retreat Program.

“Most of the time,” says Paloma Godez, an 18-year-old senior at Cristo Rey, “you are distracted by your life



Sean O'Sullivan, SJ, presides over a liturgy with students and faculty members from Cristo Rey Jesuit High School during a recent Kairos Retreat at Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House where executive director John Dillon, SJ, says he and his staff "are trying to create an atmosphere where God can touch people."

and your responsibilities. But when you are at the retreat house, you can concentrate on yourself, on your heart, and on God." Paloma says the retreat house was so calm and quiet it reminded her of a ranch. She also

thinks horses would be cool. Unfortunately, the request for horses didn't make it to Fr. Dillon before work was begun on a massive expansion and conference center that is slated to open in September.



"The Hispanic community has great knowledge, and beautiful traditions," says Bill Spine, SJ, visiting here with parishioners at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Lexington, KY, during a liturgy on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in December.

Horses or not, "Everyone on our staff is trying to create an atmosphere where God can touch people," Fr. Dillon says. He says recovering alcoholics often leave their retreats glowing with a peaceful awareness of God in their lives. "And the high school students who come here love this place," he adds. "It's a venue where they experience God's love for them and it's a joy to see them awakening to their faith."

"We've seen a big jump in the number of retreatants since September 11," Fr Dillon says. "People are realizing there's evil in the world, and they're saying 'I have a responsibility to remedy this.' People are feeling a new call." It seems it's a call to change the world. Milford and Bellarmine are helping people listen to that call by combining Ignatian spirituality with peaceful settings. The hope, Fr. Dillon says, is that people will go forth and try to answer this call in the world.

Evangelization in the Chicago Province is not limited to the work done in the two retreat houses. On December 12, 2002, feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Fr. Bill Spine, SJ, celebrated the liturgy of the Eucharist for parishioners at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Lexington, KY. Every pew in the cavernous church was filled despite an early blast of Midwestern winter weather. The celebration of the Virgin of Guadalupe's contribution to the Church was beautiful: full of spirit, song, substance, and symbol. It was a celebration replicated in parishes across the country, from the Bronx to Tampa, from Chicago to Los Angeles.

This comes as no surprise to Fr. Spine. He cites statistics showing that Hispanics currently make up roughly 30% of the population of the Catholic Church in the United States and 50% of the Church population under the age of 30 is made up of Hispanics. "The Church is the Hispanic population," he says, "and in the years to come, the population will only continue to grow."

Fr. Spine's work in Lexington seeks to "help Spanish speakers become an active part of Church life in the diocese of Lexington." He estimates that 10% of the area's Hispanic Catholics have strong English language skills; 90%, therefore, are excluded on a number of levels from full participation in the Church.

As associate director of formation for the office of Hispanic Ministry in the Diocese of Lexington, Fr. Spine works to "form Hispanics so they can come to sit at the table with white people. The Hispanic community has great knowledge, and beautiful traditions," he says. "They are the Church, so we want them to be active and imaginative in their church. But the only way a group can become part of American society is to get prepared. That's what Catholic education was about in the beginning, training immigrants to participate more fully in life. That's what we're trying to do now. We want people to be able to fully participate, and bring their faith traditions into the Church."



Cultural Leadership and Formation at ICLM

Fr. Tom Florek, SJ, directs Instituto Cultural de Liderazgo en el Medio-Oeste (ICLM), which translates roughly into Midwest Cultural Leadership Formation Institute. The aim of Fr. Florek's work is identical to that of Fr. Spine: to prepare the Hispanic community for fuller participation in the church, especially at leadership levels. To do this, Fr. Florek and his associates offer a variety of classes in the dioceses of Grand Rapids, Detroit, and Toledo. ICLM's effort is emblematic of the goals of "solidarity with the poor" in that it does not minister to the needs of a community as much as it seeks to understand a community and help the community come into its own, so it may appreciate the significant contributions it can make to the larger Church.

Evangelization happens in retreat houses, on ISP retreats, and in the Hispanic community in Lexington, but what exactly is it? Fr. Joe Folzenlogen, SJ, evangelization coordinator for the archdiocese of Indianapolis, is quick to define what evangelization is not. "In our culture, we so often link evangelization with stereotypes of high pressure, hard sell, manipulative recruitment. It does involve welcoming and invitation," he says, "but not selling or forcing."

Fr. Folzenlogen defines evangelization as "bringing the good news of Jesus Christ into every human situation." This, he adds, is not the exclusive work of the ordained but the work of baptized Christians everywhere, those who constitute our "common priesthood."

Fr. Folzenlogen's work is dedicated to training lay Catholics around the diocese of Indianapolis so they can make evangelization more a part of the life and mission of their parishes. He writes a column for the *Indianapolis Criterion*, the diocesan paper, maintains the diocesan website, publishes an annual



"Our relationship with Christ is dynamic. We're never done. Christ wants an ever-deepening relationship with each of us," says Joe Folzenlogen, SJ, pictured at a Disciples in Mission Conference in Washington DC with Celina Acosta-Taylor, a member of the Indianapolis Archdiocesan Multicultural Commission.

evangelization supplement, preaches, and routinely crosses the sprawling diocese of Indianapolis by car to offer training sessions in parishes.

Thanks to his seven years of work in this ministry, Fr. Folzenlogen is able to articulate very clearly how evangelization takes place. "We as Catholics and Jesuits evangelize in three different ways: by inviting forward, inviting back, and inviting in."

"Our relationship with Christ is dynamic. We're never done. Christ wants an ever-deepening relationship with each of us." Inviting forward involves inviting active Catholics into a deeper relationship with Christ through spiritual direction, retreats, renewals, and a host of other programs aimed at promoting personal growth. Inviting back involves welcoming into the Church those who may have left or chosen not to participate for some time. Inviting in involves reaching out to those who have not been part of a Church family."

Agreeing with Fr. Folzenlogen's remarks, Fr. Spine adds "The goal of any evangelization is to bring gospel values to the world to make it better."

Evangelization on the Screen

Fr. Mitchell C. Pacwa, SJ, was recently missioned to serve full-time at Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) where he has replaced Mother Angelica, helped develop new programming initiatives, and served as host of "EWTN Live," a weekly talk show designed to teach and prepare viewers for evangelism. He is pictured here during a 2002 show interviewing Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach, SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus.



a line of books for children called Loyola Kids. The Press is proud of the fact that textbook and catechetical materials for grammar school students account for roughly

90% of its business. "That's what Ignatius would've wanted," Terry Locke says. "He wanted his Jesuits concerned with the catechetical education of youngsters. When he sent Jesuits to the Council of Trent he told them, 'when you're not engaged with bishops and Church leaders, you should be on the street teaching children.'" Every

year 800,000 grammar school students use Loyola Press products, and Terry expects that number to rise in the future.

The Press also prints hundreds of thousands of copies of its trade books each year. These books, which can usually be found in major bookstores, also represent the Press' mission to nurture lived Catholic faith. In 2002 they published, among others, *The New Faithful: Why Young Adults are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy* by Colleen Carroll, *Radical Compassion: Finding Christ in the Heart of the Poor*, by Fr. Gary Smith, SJ, and *Raising Kids who Will Make a Difference* by Susan Vogt.

This goal is shared by Loyola Press, where Fr. George Lane, SJ, works with an incredibly talented lay staff to "continue the Jesuit tradition of service through the printed word."

Terry Locke, senior vice president at Loyola Press, elaborates on their goals. "The Press sees itself as a dynamic nurturer of lived Catholic faith," she says. The primary business of the Press is the production of textbooks and resources for directors of religious education and principals at Catholic grammar schools. "Like Ignatius, we're working with those who can help many," Terry says. "Our goal is to help those in leadership positions do their work."

Terry points to one of Loyola Press' recent releases as a good example of their work. *Gathering Together* is a flexible family formation program designed to help parents whose children are preparing to celebrate First Reconciliation and Eucharist. "Many adults today aren't fully formed in their faith and still others undereducated about their faith. This program is designed to be a resource for directors of religious education who are fielding basic questions from

parents about faith. "A lot of parents won't go into a church but they'll do anything for their kids," Terry says. "This presents us with an opportunity to reach out and touch the hearts of parents who may have been missed. I call it stealth adult faith formation," she quips.

In addition to its array of catechetical resources, Loyola Press publishes a series of English textbooks called Voyages in English, and



"A lot of parents won't go into a church but they'll do anything for their kids," says Terry Locke, senior vice president at Loyola Press, explaining how Loyola Press seeks to evangelize children and parents in its Gathering Together series, shown with some of the Press's trade book offerings.



Del Deocampo and Eric Styles, Charis Ministries Apostolic Board members and retreatants, visit after a presentation on the life of St. Robert Bellarmine at John Barleycorns, a Chicago bar. In addition to presentations and days of recollection, Charis offers a wide variety of retreat opportunities for people between the ages of 20 and 40.

Another evangelization initiative begun three years ago by the Chicago Province is Charis Ministries, a unique program for so-called Gen-Xers in Chicago and Cincinnati. “Charis,” a Greek word, means grace, mercy, or special manifestation of the divine, and the goal of the Charis program is to provide opportunities for spiritual growth and even “manifestations of the divine” for people between the ages of 20 and 40.

Early in 2000, Fr. Baumann asked Fr. Michael Sparough, SJ, to consider strategies and techniques for evangelizing “Generation X.” Fr. Sparough, armed with a graduate degree in acting from Yale University and extensive experience in retreat ministry and spiritual direction, came up with Charis and began offering activities that same summer. Today he directs the constantly growing program with Diane Fraser, and Joan Chidester-Stoltz.

Diane, Gen-Xer herself and associate director of Charis, explains the program’s mission this way: “Catholicism is not as much the norm in our generation as it has been in genera-

tions past. As a result, our generation is full of people who haven’t ever really claimed their faith. It’s not so much that people have fallen away, it’s more that few people ever chose to be truly Catholic.

“But we’re the Church. We’re the Church of the present and the Church of the future,” Diane says, though she’s quick to point out that the church is thinning and cites a recent presentation by R. Scott Appleby, a historian at Notre Dame University, to underscore the urgency of the situation facing the Church and its younger members. At no other time, Appleby says, has “a need for widespread catechesis and re-evangelization of broad segments of the Catholic community coincided with so dire a shortage in the number of priests, religious, and seminarians.” He goes on to say it can be argued that “no previous generation of American Catholics inherited so little of the content and sensibility of the faith from their parents as have today’s Catholic youth.”

Diane says the Jesuits of the Chicago Province conceived Charis as a way to welcome young people into

the fold of the Church before they fall away. And so far the program seems to be succeeding. Since its inception, Charis has offered dozens of opportunities for spiritual growth, retreats, alumni events, spiritual direction, small faith groups, presentations, and pilgrimages. So far 675 people have participated in Charis programs and more still have expressed interest.

What sets Charis apart, Diane says, is not the number of participants but the program’s willingness to draw on the lived experience of young adults in today’s world. Delia (Del) Deocampo is one such young adult. Del, who sells advertising space in ESPN the Magazine, says “I talked myself into going on my first retreat under the guise that it’d force me to turn my cell phone off.”

Del grew up Catholic and attended CCD until the age of 14, but says she’d drifted away from organized religion. “The retreat was great. It was a lot of relearning for me, but really it was me learning whether or not being Catholic was still a fit for me.” Before going on the retreat, she says, “my rule was never to talk politics or religion in a social setting. People have their beliefs and that’s none of my business. On the retreat I broke down some of those barriers. I can’t tell you how long it’s been since I said the word ‘God.’”

Since Del attended a Charis “Seek-



Charis Ministries, directed by Michael Sparough, SJ, and Diane Fraser, provided John Sherman with one of his most personally and spiritually rewarding experiences.

er's" retreat in the summer of 2001, she has led three more retreats and been invited to sit on the Charis board. Despite her initial hesitancy to attend a retreat, she unabashedly recommends them now. "Sometimes I'm walking down the street not doing anything and I'll panic. I'm not doing anything. Am I supposed to be doing something? Should I call somebody? On the retreat you get away from all that; it gives you time to just stop and think about other things."

John Sherman, a 37 year-old personal financial planner, says his experience on a week-long individually directed retreat sponsored by Charis was "phenomenal, one of the most personally and spiritually rewarding experiences I've ever had."

But the retreat wasn't just a personal experience for Sherman. While it was a springboard to a deeper faith and spirituality for him, it was also a springboard to a new career. "I'd been working in management consulting and I just wasn't happy with what I was doing. I wanted to do something more impactful on the lives of individuals. The retreat gave me an opportunity to look within and see other opportunities." With his skill set, John felt the best way he could serve others was as a financial planner, "by helping people secure their futures."

Diane Fraser says John's call to service is evidence that Charis is working. "Ultimately we're evangelizing people to serve. What we're doing is trying to help people lead a life that will build the kingdom. There's a natural link between evangelization and service."

Fr. Sparough points out that the notion of service is central to the Spiritual Exercises and thus central to Charis' work. "Toward the end of the Exercises, in the Contemplation to Obtain Divine Love, Ignatius says 'love must express itself not just in words, but in deeds.' This concept is central to all Charis retreats."

Likewise, it's central to all the evangelization efforts in the Chicago Province.



Cristo Rey Jesuit High School

In June, 2002, Cristo Rey unveiled a brilliant mosaic on the front of the school's recently completed classroom building that celebrates the hopes, heritage, and aspirations of the school's 500 students. Fr. John P. Foley, SJ, president, blesses the mosaic with the help of Liliana Valdez, student council president. On the left side is a two pane window identical to the windows used in the new building. Outside one pane is a view of a rural Mexican landscape. Outside the other pane is a view of rooftops in Pilsen with the skyline of Chicago rising in the background. The window represents the unique perspective of Cristo Rey's students, many of whom have distinct roots both in the United States and Mexico. It also represents Cristo Rey's willingness to serve their students and families not just by educating them, but by seeking to understand their heritage, history, and perspective.

Opened in 1996 to serve high school students and their families in Pilsen, Cristo Rey has flourished and today similar schools are opening in cities across the United States. Much of the school's success can be attributed to an innovative work-study program developed by the Chicago Province that allows students to pay much of their own tuition by working five days each month in entry level clerical positions at hospitals, law-firms, banks, and various businesses in and around Chicago.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE POOR

The Jesuits review and adapt their fundamental mission during their General Congregations, somewhat infrequent meetings of delegates from every Jesuit province in the world. The fundamental mission doesn't change, but new articulations of the mission are regularly drafted to respond to contemporary needs. The most recent version was created by

the 34th General Congregation held in Rome in 1995. It reads: "The contemporary mission of the Society is the service of faith and the promotion in society of that justice of the Gospel that is the embodiment of God's love and saving mercy."

To further that mission, the congregation wrote "A continuing personal conversion, finding Jesus Christ in the brokenness of our world, living in solidarity with the poor and outcast, so that we can take up their cause

under the standard of the cross” is absolutely essential. “Our sensitivity to such a mission will be most affected by frequent direct contact with these ‘friends of the Lord,’ from whom we can often learn much about faith. Some insertion into the world of the poor should therefore be part of the life of each member.” Later the Congregation asserted that their “residences should be encouraged among the more neglected groups of people.”

“Living in solidarity with the poor” is, quite simply, the means by which the contemporary mission of the Society of Jesus is to be fulfilled, and it’s precisely this realization that has given rise to new ministries in the province such as Claver Mission, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps, and the Ignatian Spirituality Project. The same insistence on solidarity with the poor has also infused established ministries like the chaplaincy program at Cook County Hospital, St. Procopius Parish, Heartland Center, the Jesuit international ministries in Peru, India, and Nepal, and the work of Jesuit brothers Don Bengert and Jack Martin in Cincinnati with a renewed sense of energy and purpose.

Claver Jesuit Mission is one of the Chicago Province’s newest initiatives, an apostolate currently located in and serving a predominantly African-American community in Cincinnati. Fr. Baumann says the mission, established on June 1, 2000, is there “to receive the graces of the African-American community and with that to offer the apostolic gifts of the Society in a collaborative way.” The Jesuits assigned there, Fr. Jim Hasse, SJ, Fr. Tim Hipskind, SJ, Fr. Lou Lipps, SJ, and Br. Mike O’Grady, SJ, are working at various ministries in the community and at the local Catholic Church, Mother of Christ. They strive constantly to listen, learn, and live as good neighbors.

“You have to be present if you hope to work with people, and when

Jesuit ministry is particularly directed towards those who have not heard the Gospel, those who are at the margins of the Church or of society, those who have been denied their dignity, those who are voiceless and powerless, those weak in faith or alienated from it, those whose needs are greater than they can bear.”

— General Congregation 34, Decree on Ministerial Priesthood and Jesuit Identity #169

I say present I don’t mean the great white fathers coming in each day,” says Fr. Hasse. “That’s why we live here. If we’re going to have an effective ministry, we have to be treated as equals. And by rubbing elbows each day, our images of the people who live here and their images of us become truer.”

For the last two and a half years the Jesuits at Claver have attempted to live and work in proximate solidarity with the poor. Fr. Hasse points out, however, that “poor” is a somewhat inadequate descriptor for the people in the economically depressed community where the Claver Mission is based. “I came from a family of nine,”

Fr. Hasse says, “and looking back we were probably poor. But then we didn’t think so. The problem with labeling people as ‘poor’” he adds, is that it becomes an all encompassing label when it actually refers to little more than their economic status. “We’re constantly receiving the graces of the African-American community here,” Fr. Hasse says. “They have an extremely rich culture with beautiful traditions of prayer and worship. It’s a generous culture. And there is much to give. Everyone has gifts. Sometimes when we call people ‘poor’ we aren’t able to see that.”

The fact of the matter, however, is that South Cumminsville and Winton



Fr. James E. Shapelle (center), pastor of Mother of Christ Parish, says the Jesuits effect on the neighborhood has been extremely positive because of their desire “to come in and be with people, and in no way imply that we know your problems and can solve them.” Fr. Shapelle is pictured with Fr. Hasse (right) and Glen Glenn in front of a mural Fr. Hasse painted at Mother of Christ.

Hills are low-income neighborhoods. Fr. Bill Creed, SJ, who helped create the Claver Mission, refers to the state of such a neighborhood as material poverty. "Material poverty involves a lack of food, drink, shelter, medicine, learning, etc." But this is not the only kind of poverty, Fr. Creed says. There is also spiritual poverty, the realization that we are finite creatures who need God.

"Solidarity with the poor," Fr Creed says, "flows out of both kinds of poverty; it fosters the elimination of material poverty and the embracing of spiritual poverty by joining the poor in their struggle." Fr. Creed also points out that choosing to "be with the poor" demands listening to others with compassionate ears.

The Jesuits at the Claver Mission believe this is the best way to become part of the community, the best way to begin to serve. In 2000, when the mission was first established, they began not by marching into town, tearing a hole in the ground, and erecting a gleaming new residence. Instead they found a house in the neighborhood and moved in quietly. Each Jesuit found a different job in the community.

Fr. Hasse does pastoral work at the local parish, Mother of Christ, and



Heartland Center

Fr. James M. Dixon, SJ, was recently appointed an associate at Heartland Center in East Chicago, IN, where he will serve in a variety of capacities: in the Office of Peace and Social Justice of the Diocese of Gary, as Coordinator of Rural Life Ministry for the Diocese, as Heartland Center's liaison with the Hispanic Ministry Office and in prison ministry. Any article about "solidarity with the poor" in the Chicago Province would be incomplete without mention

of Heartland Center, whose mission it is to work in solidarity with all segments of society, especially the poor, to construct a more just and human society. Founded in 1987, Heartland Center seeks to fulfill its mission not by offering typical "service" like homeless shelters or food banks, but rather by researching social issues and disseminating its findings free of charge to organizations involved in education, leadership training, and community coalition building.

works as an artist creating murals and original paintings for people and buildings in the neighborhood. Fr. Lou Lipps does chaplaincy work at a juvenile detention center as well as pastoral and spiritual work at Mother of Christ. Fr. Tim Hipskind found work with two community organizations dealing with health and environmental issues. He helped lead a campaign to block the expansion of a garbage facility suspected of polluting the neighborhood and surrounding areas. Fr. Hipskind also sings in the choir at Mother of Christ and offers spiritual

direction for people in the neighborhood. Br. Mike O'Grady began work in the community service office at St. Xavier High School in Cincinnati. He directs programs that expose the largely middle- and upper- class students of St. Xavier to lower-income neighborhoods and people in Cincinnati. Br. O'Grady also runs a program in the neighborhood designed to help better prepare young men for a college preparatory education. Today two of the students with whom he's worked are completing their first year at St. Xavier High School. These



St. Procopius Parish

St. Procopius Parish in Pilsen, a predominantly Mexican-American neighborhood on the south side of Chicago, is another place Jesuits in the Chicago Province live in proximate "solidarity with the poor." The Jesuit community is located just two doors north of the bustling parish the Province has operated for the Archdiocese of Chicago since 1991. Jesuits Timothy A. Howe and Charles W. Niehaus serve as pastor and associate pastor at the parish. In this picture Fr. Howe visits with a family after one of the many Sunday liturgies offered at St. Procopius.

four Jesuits, and Dr. Dave De Marco, SJ, who spent two years at Claver, have added a new dimension to the Jesuit ministerial effort in Cincinnati, and given concrete realization to the term “solidarity with the poor.”

In so doing they’ve become neighbors to the community. “Children are always coming to the door calling, ‘Fr. Louie, Fr. Louie,’” Fr. Hasse says. He also recalls one of the first times he cut the grass in front of their home. “I was out there pushing the lawn mower back and forth,” he says, “and Mrs. Andrews, our neighbor across the street, walked towards me with an extension cord. She set it down and disappeared. A few minutes later she was back with a weed whacker. Just like that she started to help.”

Marilyn Evans, a Cincinnati native and president of the South Cumminsville Community Council, has lived in the neighborhood for 38 years and now lives three doors from the Jesuits. “Not many people in the neighborhood were aware of their arrival. And when people learned four or five white priests had moved in, there were some raised eyebrows. You don’t always know what you’re getting. But,” she says, “it didn’t take the community long to warm up to the new residents.” She recalls when Fr. Hasse first started hanging his artwork on the fence outside the Claver Mission. I said to myself, “O Lord, the kids are going to put graffiti all over them. Does that man know what he’s doing? But they didn’t vandalize them. The kids came and he taught them art. They were going around with pieces of paper and crayons and they came and hung them on the fence. It was their own art gallery.” Marilyn says the Jesuit presence in the neighborhood has been great for her kids. They can go down to the corner and hear all kinds of language and gang-banging talk, or they can go down and see the Jesuits. They know they have a safe haven there. The Jesuits have created relationships with them. “The fact that the Jesuits are here and able to give their time and expertise is a real blessing,” Marilyn says. “That

type of resource in a neighborhood like ours is very rare. They’re here 24/7. The community has really connected with them. They’re a rich resource and the community is beginning to see that. You can’t get money to buy what we’ve gotten.”

Fr. Baumann, who conceived the Claver Mission as a concrete way to address the Province’s priority of living and working “in solidarity with the poor,” says the specific service of the mission will evolve as the Jesuits there proceed through an apostolic review process that began in January. “My hope,” Fr. Baumann says, “is that Claver Mission will continue with an even more corporate, discerned apostolic focus in the general area of education or spirituality. As a new initiative, it is surely ‘increasing the social sensitivity of the Province,’ as the Constitutions and recent documents of the Society exhort.”

The Jesuits at Claver Community aren’t the only ones working to achieve an increased social sensitivity or the more fruitful service it yields. Br. Don Bengert regularly visits and assists the sick, elderly, and sometimes shut-in people in Cincinnati’s Over-the-Rhine and West End neighborhoods as a social minister at Mercy Franciscan St. John. Br. Jack Martin ministers to Cincinnati’s homeless and economically poor population by offering laundry and shower services at Mary Magdalen House. More about the work of these two Jesuits and some of their fellow brothers can be found on pg 16. Chicago Province Jesuits in India, Nepal, and Peru, too, seek “solidarity with the poor” so they can work to provide greater educational, spiritual, and professional opportunities to economically disadvantaged people. You can find a story about the Chicago Province’s

Jesuit Volunteer Corps



The Jesuit Volunteer Corps, founded in 1956, gives young women and men the opportunity to serve others by working full-time for social justice and peace. More than 7,000 people have participated in JVC since 1956 working to help sustain grass roots organizations large and small around the United States and the world. This year five women and one man have volunteered in Chicago: Maria Reynolds, Esperanza Community Services; Kelly Found, Friends of Battered Women and their Children; CJ Driscoll, Chicago Mutual Housing Network; Jeana Visel, Howard Area Community Center; Cheryl Wolensky, Chicago Legal Aid to Incarcerated Mothers; and Sarah Judge, Trilogry, Inc.



"A visit to Cook County Hospital is a living, breathing illustration of the trouble our society is in," says Sydney Lewis in her book *Hospital: An Oral History of Cook County Hospital*. For this reason Chicago Province Jesuits like Jim Chambers, Gene Nevins, and Bob Finn have served as chaplains to patients and staff in the hospital for the last 100 years.

long relationship with the mission in Patna, India, on pg. 30. You'll also find a story in the Vocations section on pg. 44 about how solidarity with the poor is incorporated into Jesuit formation, particularly in the experiences of Michael Christiana, SJ, who ministers to gang members on the south side of Chicago, and Thomas (Todd) Kenny, SJ, who ministers to patients and families at Cook County Hospital.

While the Province is celebrating its 75th birthday, Todd and his Jesuit colleagues at Cook County—Fr. Gene Nevins, SJ, Fr. Bob Finn, SJ, and Fr. Jim Chambers, SJ—are part of a 100-year tradition of service that began at "County," as it's called for short, when Fr. Michael McNulty, SJ, first arrived at the hospital in 1903 and began ministering to patients and their families. Their work is defined, to some degree, by the environment in which they work and the people with whom they work. In her book, *Hospital: An Oral History of Cook County Hospital* (The New Press, 1994), Sydney Lewis describes the hospital as fol-

lows: "A visit to Cook County Hospital is a living, breathing illustration of the trouble our society is in. The human toll taken by poverty, racism, violence, and despair is clearly seen at County. The effects of poor access to education, jobs, health care, and decent housing are etched on the thousands of bodies pouring through the hospital doors each and every day. In the medical world County is known for many things, but it's best known in Chicago as the place that won't turn you away."

County is Chicago's hospital for the poor, a public hospital charged with the responsibility of caring for those who cannot afford private care. St. Ignatius and his companions ministered to the poor and sick in hospitals in Rome. It was only natural then that in 1903 a Jesuit from St. Ignatius College began a ministry at the original Cook County Hospital which saw nearly 800 patients a day. It was only natural to devote more men to the hospital ministry when the new hospital building with 2,700 beds opened in 1916, even though the Jesuits were never paid for their services there and are not

paid today. Records indicate that by 1953 the Jesuit chaplains had ministered to well over 250,000 patients in the hospital.

Jesuit service to County Hospital continues today in the brand new John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital. Under the guidance of Fr. Gene Nevins, SJ, director of the Jesuit chaplaincy program, Fr. Chambers, a former missionary to India, ministers to patients in the intensive care unit while Fr. Finn puts his Spanish language skills to use ministering to patients in the children's hospital and the trauma unit, and Todd ministers to patients in the emergency room and trauma unit.

Dr. Philomina Thuruthumaly, an anesthesiologist at County, praises the Jesuit presence in the hospital. "The Jesuits have a great effect here. There are studies which suggest people who are close to God are more likely to heal; I can see how my patients are more at peace after they (the Jesuits) have been by to visit." Dr. Thuruthumaly also attends the daily mass offered by one of the chaplains when she has time. Julia Ravida, a pediatric nurse at Cook County, says "there is an inner healing that takes place. The chaplains help people feel love, joy, and hope." Teresa Thayyil, a respiratory therapist, notes that it's common to see the Jesuits arriving in the middle of the night, summoned from their beds to answer the call of a patient who wishes to see a priest.

In October of this year Jesuits will celebrate the hundredth anniversary of service to the hospital. And the next day, Fr. Nevins, Fr. Chambers, and Fr. Finn will be back at the hospital to begin another "century" of Jesuit service.

Through the creation of the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corp's (ILVC) Chicago chapter, the Chicago Province is currently working to provide opportunities for service and "solidarity with the poor" to lay people over the age of 50. Under the leader-

ship of Mr. George Sullivan, a retired attorney, ILVC welcomes senior men and women into a program of service and reflection on their service. "ILVC helps fulfill two Jesuit ideals, collaborative ministry and solidarity with the poor. The focus," George says, "is direct contact with the poor; the model is Christ who ministered to the marginalized."

Fr. Bill Creed, who along with Fr. George Von Kaenel, SJ, serves as Jesuit consultant to ILVC, points out that the mission of the Society today has been refocused on serving the poor. He cites Decree 169 of the 34th General Congregation which says "Jesuit ministry is particularly directed towards those who have not heard the gospel, those who are at the margins of the Church or of society, those who have been denied their dignity, those who are voiceless and powerless, those weak in faith or alienated from it, those whose needs are greater than they can bear." He adds that, "we Jesuits see the Ignatian Lay Volunteers as women and men in union with us on mission."

Through ILVC, the Jesuits serve their retired lay counterparts by offering opportunities for service and reflection. More importantly, the

20 ILVC members in and around Chicago also serve a broad range of institutions and social service agencies who rely on them for a variety of things. One such volunteer is Carolyn Biel, a 60-year-old, participating in her second year of ILVC. Carolyn, who spent her professional career working in human resources for Ameritech, now spends two days a week working at St. Mary of the Lake, a Catholic grammar school on the north side of Chicago. The school serves a marginally poor population made up largely of the children of immigrants from Mexico, Africa, and Eastern Europe.

She began last year as a teacher's aide in a first grade class. She was promoted to the second grade with the same class. Twice a week she travels from her home in the suburbs to the school. "My work is a blend of just being there for the students, and helping with work, answering questions, and doing anything the teacher needs me to do."

So far, she says, the experience has been extremely positive. "It's been an eye-opener for me," she says. "I've always had what I

needed: clean clothes, a warm home. I've always known where my next meal was coming from. But this isn't true with all of our students." The experience has been both challenging and rewarding for Carolyn. "I grew up in a south side home that was riddled with racial prejudice," she says. "Working in a predominantly black community has freed me of a lot of stuff I grew up with. It has been liberating to walk with the black community and get to know different people in a different way." She later adds that ILVC "really is a wonderful way to spend time."

Carolyn's experience of growth, learning, and service is precisely what the Jesuits seek for themselves through their work, and for their colleagues in the ILVC. Fr. Bill Creed touches on this point when he again cites the 34th General Congregation, "Today we realize clearly there can be no service of faith without promotion of justice, entry into cultures, and openness to others' religious experiences. There can be no promotion of justice without communicating faith, transforming cultures, and collaboration with other traditions. There can be no inculturation without communicating faith with others, dialogue with other religious traditions, and commitment to justice. There can be no dialogue without sharing faith with others, evaluating cultures and concern for justice."

This quote, not unlike Billy Joel's at the beginning of this article, is full of information. Unlike Joel's song, though, these words of the Jesuits who attended the 34th General Congregation, do not lament the fact that the world is "on fire" but offer a vision for changing it. Bringing about this change is the mission of the Society of Jesus, and, it is happening. Slowly and surely this change occurs—in Charis retreats for young people, on the front steps of Claver house in Cincinnati, and in hospital rooms in Chicago. It's happening because Jesuits and their lay partners are seeking both to evangelize and to achieve solidarity with the poor. ■



"It really is a wonderful way to spend time," says Carolyn Biel, at St. Mary of the Lake Grammar School, of her ILVC experience. "It's been liberating to walk with the black community and get to know different people in a different way."