



The Marian Journal

Keeping members and friends of the
Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos informed.

July 2010

Volume 2, Number 3



*We are a
community of
confessing
believers who
affirm the Holy
Scriptures. We
are committed to
the Biblical and
Christ-exalting
truths of the
Catholic-faith
tradition.*



*O.S.S.T. is an
independent
Catholic
jurisdiction in the
tradition of the
Old Catholic
Church.*

Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos

(Ordo Sanctissimae Theotokos, O.S.S.T.)

O.S.S.T. Continues to Grow!

On May 15, 2010, the Bishop-Abbot received **Brother Jeffrey Alan Leach's** transfer from the Order of Mary Theotokos and his renewal of vows as a First Professed First Order (Ascetic) Monk. Brother Jeffrey is a Church of England Seminarian from Pendeford, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, United Kingdom.

On May 23, 2010, Pentecost Sunday, two new members of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos made their Promises as Postulants of O.S.S.T.

Deaconess Denise Boley Long, an Anglican Deaconess from Odessa, Texas participated in the Rite of Blessing and Reception of a Postulant and made her Promise as a Postulant. Denise holds dual membership in the Community of St. Ita and St. Fillan, one of our sister communities in the Fellowship of the Holy Theotokos.

Nicoletta Lynn Parmalee, a Celtic Catholic from Pennsylvania participated in the Rite of Blessing and Reception of a Postulant and made her Promise as a Postulant.

On May 26, 2010, Saint Philip Neri, **Brother Jeremy Jay Salquenetti (Josh)**, a Roman Catholic and former Dominican Novitiate from Tigard, Oregon participated in the Rite of Solemn (Final/Perpetual) Profession and took his vows as a First Order (Ascetic) Monk.

On Saturday, June 11, 2010, The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, **Bishop Earl Lewis Frazier**, another new member of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos celebrated the Rite of Blessing and Reception of a Postulant and made his Promise as a Postulant. Bishop Earl is an Old Catholic Bishop from Milpitas, California.

On Tuesday, June 29, 2010, St. Peter and Paul, Apostles, **Brother John Alban Bene't Pendlebury**, an Anglican Catholic from Lancashire, United Kingdom participated in the Rite of First (Temporary) Profession and took his vows as a First Order (Ascetic) Monk.

Candidates soon to be joining the Order as Postulants are:

Helene Marie Smith, a member of the Church of England from Oxley, West Midlands, United Kingdom will, by the grace of God, participate in the Rite of Blessing and Reception of a Postulant on August 12, 2010, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and will make her Promise as a Postulant.

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church.*



*Ordination to the
priesthood is
always a call and
a gift from God.*



Father James Charles Donadio, an Eastern Orthodox priest from El Cajon, California will, by the Grace of God, participate in the Rite of Blessing and Reception of a Postulant and make his Promise as a Postulant at a date to be determined.

Father Christopher E. Richard, an Old Catholic priest from Albany, New York will, by the Grace of God, participate in the Rite of Blessing and Reception of a Postulant and make his Promise as a Postulant on July 25, 2010, the Feast of Saint Christopher.

Congratulations to our new and prospective members of the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos on this wonderful occasion... Welcome!

NOTE: Since our founding in September of 2009 with our three original charter members, our membership has now grown to sixteen. God has indeed been gracious to us!

Holy Orders – Ministerial Priesthood

The Church is the Body of Christ. As such, the whole Church shares in the nature and tasks of Christ, our leader. This includes sharing in his priesthood. But beyond this "common priesthood of the faithful", there is the special or "ministerial priesthood" of Christ that certain members of the Church are called to receive through the sacrament of Holy Orders.

Each type of priesthood is a sharing in the priesthood of Christ. And both types are related to each other. But there is a basic difference between them. In the Eucharistic sacrifice, the ordained priest acts "in the person of Christ" and offers the sacrifice to God in the name of all, and the people join with the priest in that offering. The two roles of priest and people go together. Priests share in Christ's ministry by preaching his gospel, doing all in their power to bring their people to Christian maturity. They baptize, give absolution in the sacrament of penance, and act as the Church's witness in the sacraments of matrimony and anointing of the sick. Priests celebrate the Eucharist, which is "the center of the assembly of the faithful over which the priest presides". All priests are united in the single goal of building up Christ's Body. In addition to bishops and priests, deacons also have a special sharing in the sacrament of holy orders.

If you discern in your faith life a calling to serve the Church as a priest or a deacon, please contact the Bishop-Abbot to further explore the call of God in your life.

How do I Accept the Call?

There are four steps that any man or woman must take when praying about becoming a priest. The first of these is to decide whether to become a diocesan or religious priest. Diocesan priests are bound to their bishop through their ordination to the priesthood. Religious priests are bound to their religious congregation and their superior through their ordination. Diocesan priests are the parish priests you see every weekend. Religious priests focus on the religious order or congregation they belong to.

After discerning diocesan or religious priesthood, the next step is to contact the vocations director for your diocese or for the particular religious order in

Me, a priest? How do I know?

The first sign that Jesus may well be calling you to be a priest is a strong feeling deep within you. It is there that the voice of Jesus will reach, stirring you to listen more deeply and to discover his loving will for you in his Church.



When God chooses those to share in the ordained priesthood of Christ, he moves and helps them by his grace.



which you are interested in being a part of. The third step would be to enter into a formation program. Both of these steps are guided by the bishop or by the superior of the religious order in which you enter.

Talk to your parish priest or a person you trust if you are thinking or praying about becoming a priest. You can also contact the Bishop-Abbot for more information.

What is a Priest?

Diocesan Priesthood

The priest is above all a man or woman of prayer. As an ordained representative of Christ, the priest's most important prayer is to re-present the sacrifice of Jesus during Holy Mass. Their parishes rely on them to offer a sacrifice "holy and acceptable to God." Throughout the week, too, at parish meetings and community functions, they are often asked: "Father or Mother, will you lead us in prayer?" They are seen as a person accustomed to speaking with God.

Every day, a priest prays the Liturgy of the Hours and spends time in private meditation. Their private prayer is essential, for they must know Him of whom they speak, teach and preach; they must come to have an intimate relationship with Him. Jesus is the *raison d'être* (a French phrase meaning "reason for being") of the priest.

A Priest is a Prophet. Since the beginning of Christianity, people have come to Jesus through preaching. Today, this is still the primary duty of the priest. The large majority of Catholics get their information about the faith and their inspiration to practice it from the pulpit.

Men and women who can articulate their excitement about their Faith are a great treasure to the Church. But it is not always easy to put one's faith into words. The Church faces a particularly difficult task in her efforts to preach the word of God in all cultures in which the faithful are constantly challenged by consumerism and a pleasure-seeking mentality.

A priest's duty, then, is to teach his or her people how Christ's life is relevant to their own. They answer the question, "How can I live out my faith today?"

A Priest is a King. Priests are not priests for themselves. The ordained priest shares in the mission of Jesus as Priest, Prophet, and King. Priests pray and celebrate divine worship. As prophets, they preach and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As representatives of His kingship, they serve others.

At the Last Supper, Jesus gave the Eucharistic mandate to His apostles, "Do this in memory of me." But not before the Lord had knelt down and washed their feet. Jesus said, "What I have done for you, you must do for one another."

Priests must be servants to God's people. They bring the love and strength of Christ into the school, the hospital room, the prison, the ghetto...wherever God's people are and especially wherever they suffer, the priest is there.

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Our Order is distinguished by certain charisms, or gifts given by God for the benefit of the Christian community. These charisms guide all Marianist ministries and programs:



People of faith. As spiritual individuals, Marianists carry out God's will in their service to others.



Followers of Mary. Marianists view Mary as the model of discipleship. Just as Mary gave birth to Jesus, Marianists seek to bring the presence of Jesus to life within themselves and others.



Called as a Consecrated Priest, Brother, or Sister

Through prayer, reflection, and conversation with others about our dreams and talents, we can best combine our talents with a lifestyle that will help us to share the Gospel of service with others.

Lifestyle

Consecrated priests, sisters, and brothers are people of faith who:

- emphasize the values of prayer, loving service, and simple living in community with others.
- live by a vow of poverty, realizing that what they have is from God and that ownership of these things is merely temporal. Married members are required to consider their marriage vows and their families when living within the vow of poverty.
- live by a vow of chastity, loving all people universally. Married members must be faithful to their marriage vows. Unmarried members must live completely celibate lives. All must keep themselves pure in body and mind, according to their state in life.
- live by a vow of obedience, listening to God's will through prayer and other people. Obedience is nothing more than listening to God through one's monastic Community while giving special recognition to the Abbot/Abbess as the Community's expression of Christ as teacher.

Consecrated brothers, sisters, and priests:

- are those whose needs, hopes, and desires are much like anyone else's: a need to love and be loved, a need for support; and a desire to share their gifts with others.
- are called to a lifestyle of sharing themselves, their joys, sorrows, failures, and successes. All of who they are, individually and together, is brought before the Lord in prayer. Each sister, brother and priest sets aside daily time for prayer. This is their way of centering their lives in God and receiving God's strength and love. Praying as a community, they offer worship and praise to God and express together their dependence on God.
- may be called to serve wherever the church's needs are the greatest. What binds these sisters, brothers, and priests together with their diverse interests is their desire to share their lives with each other in community, and to minister to God's people in a variety of ways.

Contact Information

For more information contact the Bishop-Abbot directly.

Permanent Diaconate Vocations

Ordained Ministry of Service Called To:

Share – Witness – Counsel – Console – Proclaim – Celebrate

People of community. Marianists believe that living, praying and supporting one another in community enriches their faith and strengthens their ability to meet world challenges.



Discipleship of equals. Brothers and priests share equal status within the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos.



Leaders in mission. The Marianist mission is to bring Christ to the world and to work for the coming of His kingdom.



In order for the Good News to become incarnate, it is necessary for the church to have ordained ministers in all of the various communities. The presence and witness of deacons from all communities will more successfully identify ministerial needs and advance the response of meaningful Christian Services.

The Permanent Diaconate is open to all men and women of our community who meet the basic requirements and seek to respond to the call to serve following prayerful discernment. The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos welcomes inquiries from men and women in all walks of life and backgrounds.

Introduction

The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos recognizes the Church's need for an officially sanctioned group of men and women dedicated to duties of charity and of administration. These duties, so very necessary for the life of the Church, can in many cases be filled best by those serving in the Permanent Diaconate.

An Ancient Office...

The origins of diaconal ministry can be found in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 6:1-6). As the Church began to grow, it became obvious that "some to serve" were needed so that those who were "sent to preach and spread the word" could properly fulfill this ministry.

The care of the poor, especially widows and orphans, was a special and major concern. Here, as elsewhere, the evidence shows that deacons were directly responsible for this work.

St. Paul specifically addresses deacons in the letters to the Philippians and to Timothy; and St. Ignatius of Antioch writes of diaconal ministry. During the apostolic age, the diaconate had a significant position among the ministries of the Church. The five centuries from 100 to 600 from St. Ignatius of Antioch to St. Gregory the Great (one of the more well known deacons), has often been called the Golden Age of the Diaconate.

As the Church developed structurally, the diaconate began to decline, with the office of presbyter (priest) taking on increasing importance. With a few important exceptions, the diaconal order was for centuries only a transitional state in the steps toward priesthood. We look to restore the Diaconate as a distinctive order within our community.

For more information contact the Bishop-Abbot directly.

Why Read the Early Church Fathers?

If you are seeking a more informed faith, read the Fathers of the Church and experience their profound wisdom on all matters pertaining to the Catholic faith.

The Fathers were leading bishops, preachers and theologians who lived in the first centuries of the Church, helping to shape the faith, worship and teaching of the Church when it was young. The early Church was battered by both persecution and heresy. The Fathers, guided by the Holy Spirit, fought to

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Catholics feel the Early Church fathers were good witnesses to the Christian faith. They understood Scripture the way Jesus and the disciples taught it.



The Church Fathers, Early Church Fathers, or Fathers of the Church were early and influential theologians, eminent Christian teachers and great bishops. Their scholarly works were used as a precedent for centuries to come.



Helene Marie Smith, Candidate for Postulancy



maintain orthodox teaching. Doesn't this sound a lot like the age we live in? From the deep past, the Fathers offer us their wisdom even to this day.

The Catholic teachers and writers of this period played a role that can never be played again—they transmit and witness to the ancient apostolic tradition and give a decisive, classic shape to that heritage.

Most of these writers were saints. Some of them, such as *Tertullian*, fell noticeably short. Saint or not, none of them are personally infallible. If they should agree on anything, it would be rather remarkable, since this disparate group spans seven centuries and three continents. But their teaching does agree on a great many points, and this is a testimony that such teaching did not originate with them, but is rather being transmitted by them. It is in their consensus that the Church, from the earliest times, has regarded them as infallible commentators on Scripture and the unwritten apostolic tradition.

Their importance to apologetics and dogmatic theology goes without saying. When people claim that devotion to Mary is a medieval invention, you can conclusively prove otherwise simply by going to the Fathers of the Church. The same can be done when the *Da Vinci Code* alleges that Constantine invented the Divinity of Christ.

But just as we read Scripture for more than apologetics purposes, so with the Fathers. We would agree with the late *Cardinal Jean Danielou*: the Fathers "are not only the truthful witnesses of a bygone era; they are also the most contemporary nourishment of men and women today." One of the greatest ways to grow in the spiritual life and be imbued with the Catholic Spirit is to read the writings of the Early Church Fathers. In approaching their work, we should not simply be looking for **information**, but **formation**—to receive from them an authentically Catholic vision and a truly passionate zeal for holiness.

Your Rainbow I'll See

Lord my God my Father my friend
Lord may I love you to the end
I woke up this morning with the sun on my face
I woke up this morning full of your grace

I looked outside and saw a new day
A wonderful gift of life , to work and to play
Then sat in my garden in silence to pray
The beauty of your world you have given to me
I realized how lucky I am to be free

I have clean water to drink and to cleanse
I have my children, on me they depend
I have shelter and a nice clean bed
I have my health and a good clear head

I haven't much money, to lavishly spend
But my bills are all paid, and there's food in for the week
I am rich in your spirit in all that I seek
When I'm praying to you Lord no tears I weep

There is nothing I need Lord except for this

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise.



Sr. Sherie Jane Mercier, O.S.S.T.



While many Protestants regard Mary's perpetual virginity as a uniquely "Catholic belief," it should be noted that the Protestant reformers Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli ALL professed this belief as well.



Always help me remember what's important in life
Love, health, clean water and a safe place to live
To be thankful in life for all that you give

If sometimes Lord things aren't so good
Remind me O Lord of your deep sense of love
So that when the storms over and your rainbow I see
I`ll know I`ll go on because of your love inside me

Every day is a gift from heaven. Enjoy it and live it and cherish it. Be thankful that you woke today happy, healthy, and ready to play. In your name we pray. Amen.

This wonderful poem was written by Helene Marie Smith. Helene is a Candidate for Postuancy from Oxley, West Midlands, United Kingdom. Thank you Helene!

Mary's Role for Our Salvation

I originally was going to write about something else regarding Our Blessed Mother and Holy Theotokos but changed my mind after a recent inquiry and postings among us as brothers and sisters in the Order of O.S.S.T. I had posted some of my thoughts regarding Mary's perpetual virginity and will repeat those in this journal.

According to Tradition, Mary was brought to the temple and she was dedicated to the temple at the tender age of 3. Again, this is tradition, not facts stated in the Bible. Interestingly enough, Mary was espoused to Joseph and when the angel Gabriel came to her and told her she was full of grace, she was troubled at his saying. After Gabriel told her that she would bear Jesus, she questioned it by saying, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" I believe that Mary had a significant role in man's salvation by her Fiat to the Gabriel's statement. Of course, she then immediately departs for Elizabeth's and stays with her. Then in Luke 2:44 we find that they look for Jesus among His "kinsfolk and acquaintances" not among His "siblings". Remember by this time Jesus was 12 years old, so there should have been other children more than likely. Yet none are mentioned until Jesus' public ministry. Does this mean that Mary did not have other children? No, but the above evidence leans that way.

2) As mentioned in John 19, Jesus says to Mary, "Behold your son and to John, Behold your mother." In the Jewish tradition, widowed mothers were taken care of by the sons and if Jesus had other brothers, wouldn't it stand to reason that one of them would have taken Mary his mother into his care?

3) In Genesis, chapter 14, Abram (Abraham)'s nephew, Lot, had been taken captive, yet in verse 14, it says when Abram heard that his *BROTHER* was taken captive. Now here is where for *NEPHEW*, Brother was used. Could not this have been true in the New Testament also? Jesus also states that those who do the will of the Father is His sister, brother and mother.

So what does this mean to us all? Well, I just wanted to share my opinions and what my faith teaches. We are truly an ecumenical monastic group and we believe in Mary and her significant role in our salvation through Jesus Christ, her Son, whom she bore for us. The Catholic (Roman) church has taught the perpetual virginity of Mary for a long time. Some of the early



All men and women are called to love and serve God. They are summoned to strive in prayer and work, as far as they are able, so that by the help of divine grace they may attain to Christian perfection and union with the Holy Trinity.



Church fathers including Augustine and others believed in this. It is good and worthy for us to question such a dogma. Whether Mary did or did not remain a virgin does not make or break our salvation but she held a significant role in our salvation in her obedience to God by saying, "Be it done to me according to your word." Do we keep God's Word? Do we say those words to God when He asks us to do something impossible in our lives? I have questioned His will in my life and sometimes I say yes and sometimes I don't. But Mary never did say no. I am reminded of when she asked at the wedding feast at Cana for Jesus' help. She did not say no to His word but rather told the servants, "do what He tells you."

I pray that we will be like Mary and say, "be it done to me according to Your Word." that we might grow in His grace and love in our lives and into the lives of those we touch and meet every day.

Totus Tuus

Sr. Sherie, O.SS.T.
Our Lady of Solitude Abbey, Mayer, AZ

O.SS.T. Spiritual Formation Program

The religious life is an important mission for the enrichment of the Church and it is the duty of all Sisters and Brothers of O.SS.T. to participate in the formation process.

The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos offers a program designed to educate the participant in the Catholic faith tradition with a special emphasis on *Mariology, Scripture and Patristics, Monastic Spirituality and History, as well as Christology*. Along with the formal education process as outlined in the Spiritual Formation Program, it is our desire to assist each participant in deepening their devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary as well as their personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church.

From the earliest days of the Church, individuals have been compelled by the calling of the Holy Spirit to consecrate themselves to God in a vowed life. As early as the third century, men, and later women, answered that call and bound themselves to a particular community and to a way of life. The spiritual pillars of prayer, work, sacred reading (lectio divina), study, meditation, reflection, and contemplation lay at the heart of vowed religious life. There is no time when a Religious is not in the process of "becoming" the vocation he or she has been called to. When the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos speaks of formation, we speak of a lifetime endeavor. There are sign posts along the way. Postulancy normally lasts six months, First Professed one year, and Life Professed, as the name implies, for a lifetime. During each of these periods, there are required readings, reflection papers, study, private prayer, contemplation, meditation, sacred reading (lectio divina), the Divine Offices, and of course, work. Recognizing that we are a "monastery without walls", the formation program is challenging but sensitive to the demands of a contemporary religious life lived outside of cloister. The formation program is designed and tailored according to each individual's circumstance, i.e., life experience, previous religious training, educational background, etc.

First Order Monks and Third Order Regular Tertiaries share a common formation program. The three steps of commitment or stages of this formation

These are the signs of a vocation to the monastic life: a desire for God and for the way that leads to God. In it the monk binds him or herself by solemn vow to stability in the community, conversion of life (in which are included chastity and poverty) and obedience.



The essential rite of the sacrament of Holy Orders for all three degrees consists in the bishop's imposition of hands on the head of the ordained and in the bishop's specific consecratory prayer asking God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and his gifts proper to the ministry to which the candidate is being ordained.



program are based on the traditional road to full and lifetime acceptance into a religious order in the Catholic faith tradition. Postulancy, First Profession, and Final or Perpetual Profession.

The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos has designed a rich and meaningful formation experience for those beginning their religious journey. This richness does not come easily and requires an offering of time and study on each participant's part. Our Spiritual Formation Program will require prayer, time, reading, and reflection. Progress requires commitment. Recognizing that most O.S.S.T. members have occupations, family, and other responsibilities, the formation program is challenging and yet sensitive to the demands of contemporary life.

The community is challenged to articulate an initial formation to the monastic life as well as programs for ongoing formation. The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos' Spiritual Formation Program was created to deepen each participant's inner journey and to open new pathways of spiritual service. This program is rooted in the Marian tradition and focuses on spiritual growth and personal transformation.

During the six months of Postulancy and one year of First (or Temporary) Profession, each participant is asked to complete selected reading assignments from the four major areas of our Formal Education Process, i.e., *Mariology, Scripture and Patristics, Monastic Spirituality and History, and Christology*. The approved books are listed in the Spiritual Formation Program outline. Upon completion of each reading, a brief book report/review discussing the participant's views of the written material as well as what was learned from the reading is to be submitted.

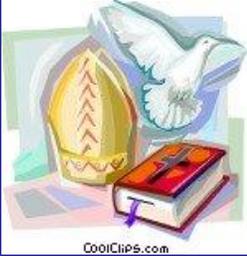
Other books or research projects of the same or similar subject matter may be substituted, and those already possessing a substantial background in any of the four major areas may be exempted upon request and only with the express permission of the Abbot/Abbess.

Just a reminder... completion of the Formal Portion of the Initial Formation Program is required before being accepted to First and Solemn Profession.

Message from the Abbot



Mary, the Theotokos, pray for us and lead us to do the Father's will for our lives.



**Order of the Most
Holy Mary
Theotokos**

**Our Lady of
Peace Abbey,
Atlanta, GA.**

**Our Lady of
Divine Providence
Abbey,
Roanoke, VA**

**Our Lady of
Solitude Abbey,
Mayer, AZ**

**Abbey of Our
Lady and
Benedict,
Lancs. UK**

**Abbey of Our
Lady of Grace,
New Port Richey,
FL**

Hayward, CA

**Our Lady of
Perpetual Hope
Abbey,
Pasadena, CA**

Somers, NY

Dear O.S.S.T. Family and Friends,

~ *Totus Tuus* ~ "Totally Yours"

Monastic practices and structures in the early Church were very different from what they are today where considerable divergences have developed in practice and organization. In the early Church, monasteries played a much more important role with abbots regarded as *de facto* leaders of the Church.

The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos is a religious community, a monastic order, and a "monastery without walls". Yes, we are indeed all of these things. Yet we are much more. O.S.S.T is an independent Catholic jurisdiction in the tradition of the Old Catholic Church.

Maintaining simplicity, we are neither institutionalized nor bureaucratic. Given our monastic orientation, we appreciate God through the eyes of the early Church rather than an institutional church.

As Marianists we are a religious congregation of brothers, sisters, and priests within the Catholic faith tradition. All the members share a vibrant community life and offer their gifts and talents, in the spirit of Mary, to the Church.

From our founding, men and women of different levels of skill and professionalism have become members. Our priests live and work together with the sisters and brothers as equals.

As a Marianist Order we try to live as Mary, the person of faith, who said "yes" to the Lord in her own life and shares Jesus concern for his brothers and sisters. "Do whatever He tells you" she told the servants at Cana (John 2:5).

Much of this edition of the *Marian Journal* has been devoted to articles dealing with Holy Orders. This of course, is intentional. From time to time, religious Orders such as ours need to institute new reforms in order to grow and become what God has intended for us to become. It is my belief that now is such a time. One of the reforms that we will be instituting concerns ordination.

Religious vows are to be distinguished from Holy Orders, the sacrament which bishops, priests, and deacons receive. Hence members of religious orders are not part of the hierarchy, unless they are also ordained priests or deacons (sometimes referred to as "priest-monks"). In the past, our Order's Charter, Rule, and Constitution recommended that those who aspire to Holy Orders and Religious Profession approach them separately. (i.e., members who wished to pursue ordination were encouraged to complete the process as outlined in the Canons of the jurisdictional diocese of which they were members. And likewise, members who sought the religious life were asked to complete the process as outlined in our charter and rule.

However, as an independent jurisdiction...just like any other jurisdiction within the Church at large; for those who are so called, I believe it's time for us to now begin training and preparing our own members for ordination. For those among us, or perspective new members who are already ordained in valid apostolic succession, we will offer incardination. We will remain a religious community of both lay and ordained.

By Baptism, all the members of the Church share in Christ's holy priesthood. It is called "the common priesthood of the faithful" because the entire Church shares in it. To build up this priesthood, Christ gives to his Church the ordained ministries of bishops, priests, and deacons through the Sacrament of

***Our Lady of
Animals Abbey,
Tigard, OR***

***Our Mother of
Sorrows Abbey,
Odessa, TX***

Pennsylvania

***Our Lady of the
Cross Abbey,
West Midlands,
UK***

***Sanctus Maria
Nostrum Abbazia
(Holy Mary Our
Mother Abbey),
Milpitas, CA***

***Our Lady by the
Lake Abbey,
West Midlands,
UK***

El Cajon, CA

Albany, NY

***E-mail:
DomRobert@osst-
abbey.org***

***We're on the Web!
www.osst-
abbey.org***



Holy Orders. Only the ordained bishop and priest may be ministers of Confirmation (or Chrismation), the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Only bishops may ordain deacons, priests, and other bishops. "The ministerial priesthood differs in essence from the common priesthood of the faithful because it confers a sacred power for the service of the faithful. The ordained ministers exercise their service for the People of God by teaching, divine worship, and pastoral governance. Deacons can baptize and witness the Sacrament of Marriage, as do priests and bishops.

The ordained bishop and priest serve the Church in the person of Christ as head of the Body. "Through the ordained ministry, especially that of bishops and priests, the presence of Christ as head of the Church is made visible in the midst of the community of believers". The Sacrament does not preserve the ordained from weakness and sin, but the Holy Spirit guarantees that the minister's sin does not impede the effectiveness of the Sacrament and its graces. The ordained are called to a holiness of life and an attitude of humility that conforms them to Christ whose priesthood they share. The priest acts not only in the person of Christ, the Head of the Church, but also in the name of the Church when presenting to God the prayer of the Church, especially in the Eucharist.

In the words of *St. Ignatius of Antioch*, "Let everyone revere the deacons as Jesus Christ, the bishop as image of the Father, and the presbyters as the senate of God and the assembly of the apostles. For without them, one cannot speak of the Church."

Bless our Order with men and women who will follow in the footsteps of Mary and serve the Church as religious brothers, sisters, deacons, and priests. Open the hearts of Your children that they may discern Your Holy Will; inspire in them a love and desire to surrender themselves to serving others in the name of Your son, Jesus Christ.

Wishing You God's Peace and Abundant Blessings,

Dom + Robert - Bishop-Abbot, O.S.S.T.

"The Old Catholic Marianists"



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