

# One Heart, One Spirit

CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Newsletter for the Province of the United States



## Spiritans in Ethiopia – Forty years and counting

Fr. Vincent Stegman, C.S.Sp.

September-October 2015

Vol. XLIII, No. 5



Rufo Gurra - 6th grade student at the Spiritan grade school - Dhoqolle, Ethiopia

On July 23, I boarded an Ethiopian Airlines flight to Addis Ababa, on my way to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the first grade school that the Spiritans opened in southern Ethiopia in 1975 in a place called Dhadim.

The first American-Dutch group of Spiritans arrived in Ethiopia in September of 1972 but it took three years to do an investigation of possible sites and then to get the government permissions to open a school. The legal reason for obtaining a work permit to stay and work in Ethiopia was to open and operate a school. Fathers Ed Kelly and Bill Jackson of the United States and Eef Nass from Holland were the pioneers of that venture. Fr. Iede de Lange followed them four months later. The three original members of the team have all passed on to their eternal reward but Iede is still there 43 years later.

The 13-hour flight from Washington D.C. was only the first stage of my trip to Dhadim. After a two-day wait in Addis Ababa to collect a few other passengers for the two cars that would make the 700 mile trip to Dhadim in the south we left on Monday, July 27, six hours before President Obama was scheduled to speak to the African Union representatives that had gathered at the A.U. conference center, located across the street from the Spiritan house in Addis Ababa. Did I say “the 700 mile trip to the south”? Yes, the normal trip is 500 miles by car, but a significant part of the road is so bad that we were advised to make a longer overnight trip to the southwest on a better road. So we did, as guests of our Irish Spiritan brother, Paddy Moran, at Arba Minch. After a great meal and pleasant evening exchanging news with Paddy we spent a quiet night and left the next morning for the 200 mile final leg of our journey to Yabello, the largest town near Dhadim which lies 23 miles from the town. Our hosts in Yabello were Fr. Iede de Lange and Fr. Dida Wario. We arrived in Yabello at 4:00 P.M., and shared the next two days with five visitors from Holland, guests of Father Iede, and the five passengers in our car.

After a rest and a chance to explore the growing town of Yabello, 10,000 population in 1995 and approximately 50,000 now, the first day of a two day celebration finally arrived. We left Yabello on Friday morning to arrive at Dhadim for the 10:00 AM Mass celebrating the 50th anniversary of Fr. Iede’s ordination. For the Mass we were honored with the presence of two bishops – the current bishop of the diocese and the retired bishop who still resides and works in a parish in the northern part of the diocese of Hawassa. The retired bishop delivered the homily at the Mass, which was celebrated outdoors in order to accommodate the nearly 400 Borana people who attended. After Mass we all shared a pleasant lunch. While the local people left between 4-5:00 PM, the rest of us stayed on until

(cont. next page)



The African Union Conference Center - Addis Ababa

## Spiritans in Ethiopia – Forty years and counting (cont.)

9:00 P.M. It was a tired group of people who returned to the town that evening to sleep.

Nothing like a celebration to bring people together. The morning after the 50th anniversary Mass we made the trip to Dhadim again to commemorate the 40 years of service to the education of the Borana people. The two bishops and most of the diocesan priests and sisters who had come the day before had returned to their home parishes and were replaced by between 700-800 local Borana and a number of government officials from Yabello town. Again it was an outdoor celebration kept relatively cool by an overcast sky. Lucky weather for us because no celebration in Ethiopia is short. The event was emceed by a former principal of the school. Dido Boru is now the “state” governor for that part of Ethiopia. A Catholic and a long-standing friend of ours, he did a wonderful job of introducing all the elements of the audience and they were a varied lot. Sometime before the celebration the government had asked the supervisor of the school, Fr. Anthony Nweke, to add grades 9 and 10 to the 8-year grade school. The school had added grades 5-8 in 1995 and now were asked to add two more grades. Dido, speaking for the government, promised to build the two classrooms for the additional grades. Another speaker, who represented the branch of the university that had opened in Yabello town three years earlier, promised to supply books for the additional classrooms. The gifts of buildings and books will mean a significant financial saving for the Spiritans.

Other speakers at the event were the Wereda (county) commissioner and the assistant commissioner, Tadi Garbica. Tadi is the brother of Fr. Kalimpe Garbica, one of the two Ethiopian Spiritan priests working in Ethiopia. Also represented at the celebration were three government officials who were graduates of Dhadim School, and six other graduates who came from a town 85 miles north of Dhadim. Three of them are now lawyers and teach at the university in Bule Hora, another is the head of the English department of the university, the fifth is purchasing agent for the university and the sixth works for the local town government of Bule Hora. It was really gratifying to see how so many of our graduates have used their education successfully. I met only two of our female graduates who are now working in government offices in Yabello town. Many other young women graduates are working in schools and as nurses in many places of the state.

Dhadim School is now in a position to continue helping the Borana people help themselves, their families and the nation to advance into the 21st century. A real tribute to our Spiritan heritage of education.

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*Dhadim school classroom building*



*Fr. de Lange celebrated 50 years of ordination in July*



*Fr. Vince Stegman and four alumni of Dhadim School*

# Missionary Disciples and Mission to Africa in 2015

by Rev. Aniedi Okure, OP, Executive Director

**Africa Faith & Justice Network**



Decades ago, hundreds of American men and women went to various parts of Africa on mission, alongside their European counterparts to bear witness to the Gospel. Their witness, especially through educational enterprise, laid the foundation for the liberation of Africans from colonial rule, the prevailing oppressive structures of the time. In 2015, about two thousand priests and sisters from Africa live and bear witness to the Gospel in the United States in a trend some refer to as reversed mission. Alongside are about three million African Diaspora groups, many of them Catholics. What does this mean to us in the context of mission? Does that mean the end of mission from the US to Africa? More specifically, is it the end of our being missionary disciples to Africans?

Quite the contrary. Mission is about witnessing to the Gospel – “You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8), and the Church at its core is always a missionary Church, called to address the structures of injustice and oppression wherever they afflict Gods’ children far or near. How do we in 2015, as missionary disciples, witness to the Gospel of Jesus, the one who came to set us free (Lk. 4:18-20) from oppressive structures so that we might have life in abundance (Jn. 10:10)? How do we build bridges between the global North and the global South as missionary disciples and witnesses of the Gospel? In what ways can we form relationships and be in solidarity today with our African sisters and brothers without having to pack our bags to travel to Africa?

Although Africa has been largely liberated from state sponsored colonial structures, new and pervasive forms of colonialism, oppression and exploitations, aided by modern technology and global linkages of multinational corporations have emerged. Tackling these structures as missionary disciples does not necessarily require leaving our homes in the US to travel to Africa; they are in our backyard and among us. Our witness to Jesus’ mission compels us to confront these oppressive structures and systems of exploitation.

Confronting them requires a new paradigm of mission to Africa, since these new systems are masters of camouflage, promising a better life and future for the poor while all the time crafting a different agenda that leaves the exploited scrambling for the scraps that fall from the master’s table, and settling for tokens in the name of charity. Modern missionary disciples need to know that many wolves come in sheep clothing. As such, they need to be “as wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Mt. 10:16) so as to uncover the real issues at stake, and what gets touted as charity. Today’s missionary disciple is invited to live in justice and truth, and challenged to address the root causes of oppression and exploitation with the aim of eradicating them and setting free our sisters and brothers created in the image of God. We never truly serve our brothers and sisters without truth and justice.

Mission is not all about money. It is about building bridges and forming relationships, working to promote the rights and dignity of our sisters and brothers, and is more important than charity. As Pope Benedict XVI puts it in his Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Africae Munus* (AM): “A charity that is unaccompanied by justice is false” (AM § 18).

The 2015 Congress invites us to rekindle a characteristic of a missionary disciple which is to motivate others to act justly in truth and charity, and bear witness to Christ’s presence in their daily engagements with others; to enable our communities to see how our experience of life is well connected to that of others far and near, how their experience informs the way we do things here in our country, and how we can work to promote the rights and dignity of our sisters and brothers whether they are thousands of miles away or among us in communities.

## U.S. Spiritans gather for General Assembly



*Fr. Francis Folleh, Major Superior TransCanada, and Fr. Mike Onwuemelie*



*Fathers Emmanuel Ahua, Joe Gaglione, Joe Herzstein and Ray French*

The Spiritan United States Province gathered on June 15-19, 2015 at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh for their tri-annual General Assembly. Eighty-five professed and lay members came together from across the United States and abroad for a time of prayer, renewal and reflection on the Spiritan life and mission. Representatives also joined the gathering from Vietnam, South Africa, Dominican Republic, Tanzania, Canada, Nigeria, Rome and the Philippines. Fr. Maurice Shortall, C.S.Sp. represented the Superior General from Rome.

Members of the U.S. Province had spent the past year meeting in regional communities throughout the province to prepare the agenda and reflect on the needs of the Spiritan mission today. In addition to reports which were given by the provincial superior and bursar on the status of the Spiritan mission in the United States today, "Mission Spots" highlighting the various ministries of the U.S. Province were presented in many creative ways by several of the participants. Two important topics which received in depth and focused discussion were the challenge of

community life as experienced in an intercultural/international setting that most Spiritans presently live in and the distinguishing characteristics of the Spiritan mission as it is lived in the United States today. The discussions of these topics were synthesized into reports and the recommendations will be forwarded to the next provincial administration for implementation.

Finally, there was a consultation of the membership on the choices for the next provincial and leadership team. As a result of the election that took place during the Assembly, Fr. Jeffrey Duaine, C.S.Sp. was reappointed

*(cont. next page)*

## U.S. Spiritans gather for General Assembly (cont.)

provincial superior for another three year term that began August 15, 2015. The Assembly participants were also given the opportunity to provide input on the selection of the next Provincial Councilor and Treasurer. The Provincial Council works with the Provincial in animating the mission and community life of the province for a three year mandate.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, it was a very prayerful and energetic week with many inspirational moments. Participants returned to their many ministries and various communities renewed in their commitment to serve the Spiritan mission of proclaiming the Good News “to the ends of the earth.”

[Photo credits: Jean-Michel Gelmetti, C.S.Sp.]



*L-R: Leading in song  
are Fathers  
Paul Hoang,  
Joseph L. Nguyen,  
Brandon Nguyen,  
Trinh Le and Huy Dinh*

### **Go Green!**

#### **Receive One Heart, One Spirit via Email!**

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## Be careful what you wish for!

Since he “pestered him so much”, the provincial finally assigned Fr. Adrian Hebert to Africa... for 53 years. Born in 1931 in Acushnet, MA, and ordained in 1958, he needed another year of theology before he received his first assignment to the District of Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. The only U.S. Province missions then were to Puerto Rico and Africa. In Africa, the Dutch had a specific area, the French had a specific area, and the U.S. had Tanzania. That is where Fr. Adrian served for most of the years between 1960-94 at various ministries included teaching - at St. James Seminary in Moshi and Oldonyu Sombu in Arusha - rector, and parochial work and diocesan treasurer at Kishimundu. Several years were devoted to missionary work with the Maasai before he returned to teaching at Usa River. He worked at the large lake area of Kikatiti Mission of Nyumba ya Mungu (House of God) where there were 16 small mission outstations. There he built

three churches, two mission houses and two small medical dispensaries before he was sent to the Monduli Mission. The U.S. Province currently has four members in Tanzania, while the provinces of Africa now supply priests internationally. Fr. Adrien is amazed at how international the Spiritans have become!

South Africa received its independence in 1994. Two years later Fr. Adrian was the only man from the U.S. province sent there to help when the German province requested help. At Vrede Parish in Bethlehem Diocese in the Free State Province, and at Pomroy in Dundee Diocese, he became involved in parochial ministry and was the Director for Postulency. True of the Holy Spirit Fathers' mission, they were doing the same work there - first evangelization, parish work and administering to the underprivileged and underserved, all work Fr. Adrien loved doing. He was able to baptize and confirm many who were initiated into the Church in those years. He worked with Fr. Jed Dilworth (from the English Province and a former OTP student of his in Tanzania), and Fr. Ned Marchessault, whom he greatly admires, at Endulen for three years. (Coincidentally, they were both assistants to a German priest who had attended Duquesne University.) Today there are only two priests from the German Province in South Africa and most of the Spiritans come from Nigeria. There are twelve 12 tribes in South Africa, and Fr. Adrien worked mostly with the Sutu and Zulu tribes who have very different customs, cultures and thinking. The Zulu people are perceived as being more arrogant and harder to get to know, while the Sutu are seen as more warm and welcoming. They live in mixed groups and tension is often high. There is a small Catholic population, but mostly it is a mixed group. All are respectful of each other, but missionary speakers must be very careful to respect the different cultures and beliefs, and their compassion must be visible.

Now Fr. Adrian serves as Chaplain with the Sisters of St. Paul at Mmabahloki Clara Home. They minister and care for about 60 elderly and infirm people in a government subsidized building that was established specifically for them. Many of the patients are blind, unable to speak and suffering from dementia, but the Sisters are devoted to their work and the people they serve. They are established and have a special vocation where they live in community and acknowledge their need for religious support to fulfill their vocation. Through the mass and the sacraments, they are sustained in their religious life. Fr. Adrien said, “One can't do anything without meaning, and their lives are a constant reminder of the Lord. Fulfilling a vocation is in itself fulfillment.”

He returns to the States about every three years for Chapter meetings or Assemblies. It was on this occasion that I talked with him. He spoke of how “the world of today is not the same, we are in a new age, the development of the Church has taken on a new character.” But he says “Change is habitual and ongoing; all missionaries have to adjust to change. Change is good. You change within your own community where you live and are among friends and family. The community sustains you. It is so important for missionaries to support and encourage one another.”

He fondly remembered several Spiritan friends - seminary classmate Fr. Joe Deniger, Fathers Tuozzolo and Perreault who were also in the same seminary; Fathers Joe Kelly, Ned Marchessault and Vince Stegman with whom he worked in Tanzania; the late Fathers Remo Bonifazi, Bill Jackson and many others; and of course the Maasai who were “very nice people”. He is happy as a missionary and would choose this life again as a Spiritan. “We need to see the similarities of peoples and cultures, to see the kindness expressed in different ways; among different people!”

It was a pleasant and uplifting afternoon I spent with Fr. Adrien, and I learned a lot from him. When we finished, Fr. Adrian stood up, turned to me and announced, “I'm happy.” I was happy, too, just feeling his joy and contentment!

- Mary Winkler, editor

## Niềm Vui Đời Sống Thánh Hiến

### The Joy of Consecrated Life

Lm. Anton Lê Quang Trinh, CSSp

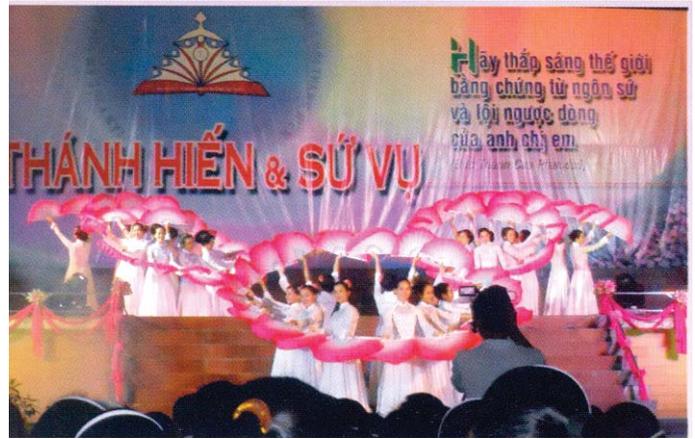


With music from a traditional folk song, words are adapted as a new song: “who says a monk is not happy, a monk is enjoying life...” The song was performed by a group of Sisters in a gentle and joyful way to express the joy of the consecrated life. The consecrated men and women feel happy when they

are living with Christ. Right from the first page in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Joy of the Gospel, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, says: **“the joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus... With Christ joy is constantly born anew”** (EG 1). Of course, the joy of the Gospel is available to all people, not only for religious. However, religious men and women encounter Jesus easier not only because they are consecrated to God, but also their way of life is a more intense following of Jesus.

The joy of the religious is a shared joy. They do not hold the joy of the Gospel for themselves, but they share the joy with other people, especially the poor, the unhappy, the oppressed, the abandoned, the abused. Religious feel the joy of commitment to serve the poor, underprivileged, abandoned in the centers of caring and fostering, and see the face of Jesus in the abandoned children, in the old man wandering or dying on the streets. The Congregation of the Holy Spirit in Vietnam reaches out to help poor children who cannot afford to go to school. The Spiritan community looks for benefactors who have a generous heart ready to help poor children by giving scholarships. Currently, there are 465 children in Ca Mau and Hue areas who receive scholarships to continue going to school. In addition, Spiritan students visit the elderly in nursing homes, HIV patients in AIDS Centers, teach the children orphaned in shelters, or poor children in class.

May the Holy Spirit be present and work in every man and woman of consecrated life, so that they truly experience the joy of the Gospel when they live with Jesus Christ and serve Him in the poor, the marginalized and the abandoned.



# Remembering in Prayer...

Please join us in praying for all those who are ill and those who are experiencing difficult losses. May the healing and consoling presence of God be their strength and hope.

## The recently deceased:

- Teresa Le Thi Vu, paternal grandmother of Fr. Martin Vu, CSSp, on Aug. 14 in Vietnam. She is believed to have been 100 or more years of age.
- Fr. Jean-Marie Deglaire, brother of Fr. Pierre Deglaire, CSSp, on Aug. 20 in his home diocese in France. Condolences can be sent to Pierre at 1970 Marygold Ave., Apt. 53, Fontana CA 92335.
- Mr. Don Fox, Spiritan Associate - District of Kilimanjaro, Flying Medical Service pilot, 92, Vermont (see obit. below).



## Those who are ill:

- Beatrice Safe, sister of Fr. Benoit Mukamba, who suffered a serious stroke at her daughter's wedding banquet; she is in hospital in Lubumbashi, Congo.
- Spiritan Fathers Joseph Deniger, Naos McCool, Girard Kohler, and Norbert Rosso - all of whom are at Marian Manor in Pittsburgh PA.
- John Marini, former Spiritan, who is battling cancer.

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## *With gratitude, we celebrate with these Spiritans their Anniversaries of Profession and Ordination*

### Ordination

Fr. Simon Lobon	25 Years	November 3, 1990
Fr. Huy Q. Dinh	15 Years	November 11, 2000
Fr. Andrew H. Do	15 Years	November 11, 2000
Fr. Brandon B. Nguyen	15 Years	November 11, 2000

### Profession

Fr. Gregory Olikenyi	35 Years	November 8, 1980
Fr. Clement Uchendu	30 Years	November 9, 1985

*Your selfless ministry in Christ  
has been inspiring, fruitful,  
worthy of the Lord and  
pleasing to Him.*

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## Rest in Peace, Don Fox

*Pat Patten, CSSp*

Don Fox was a Lay Spiritan Associate who worked in the District of Kilimanjaro. He was a pilot with Flying Medical Service there from 1988 till 1996. He died on August 14th at the age of 92 in Vermont with five of his six children present.

Don flew P-49 Thunderbolts in the Army Air Force and flew presidential protection off the coast of Washington D.C. during the Second World War.

He was the World Formation Flying champion. After the war he flew DC-3s as a commercial airline pilot. He was in the first group of post-war veterans chosen to study television production in Chicago. Subsequently, he opened the first television station in New York. Don's wife died shortly after the birth of their sixth child. He never remarried and raised the children on his own.

Don entered the field of television advertising in New York (the Trix Rabbit was one of his ideas) and worked up to the position of President for Television Advertising and Vice-President of Satchi and Satchi, which was then the largest advertising company in the world. He took early retirement and moved to Olkokola Mission in Tanzania in December of 1988. There he flew scheduled clinic flights as well as emergency flights for many years and also served on the Spiritan District Council.

Despite his amazing background, he was remarkably unassuming, simple and humble. He was good man. We will miss him.

## *Houston Event Raises Funds for Manila Formation House*

HOUSTON, TX  
July 31, 2015

Five hundred people squeezed into the ballroom at Kim Son in Houston for an evening of Vietnamese food and entertainment, a greeting by Auxiliary Bishop Vincent Nguyen of Toronto and an auction to raise funds for the planned formation house in Manila. The event raised over \$150,000 through the generosity of those in attendance and other donors who could not attend.



*Bishop Vincent Nguyen, Toronto, Fr. Michael Begley, C.S.Sp., Fr. Joe Nguyen, C.S.Sp.*

Fr. Jeff Duaime, C.S.Sp., U.S. Provincial, Spiritan Fathers Don Nesti, Mike Grey, Michael Begley, Joe Nguyen, Andy Do, Clement Uchendu, Martin Vu, Brandon Nguyen, and Galveston-Houston Archdiocese priests were also in attendance. The Vietnamese Dominican Sisters were well represented with a table of ten.



*Choir sings Come Holy Spirit*

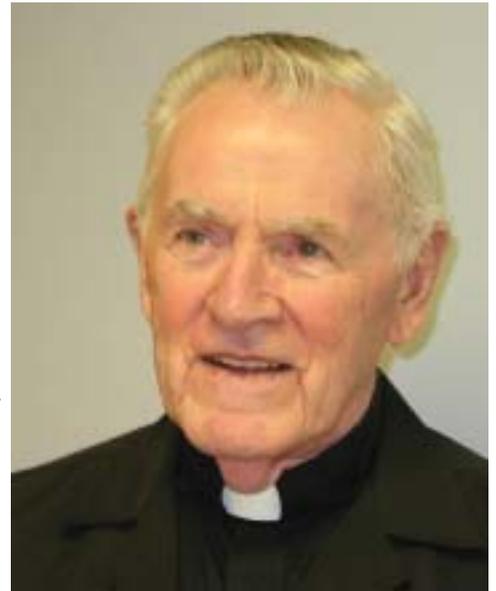
Fr. Dan Sormani C.S.Sp., presented a series of slides describing the present and planned facilities, along with photos of the young men studying for the priesthood in Manila. The project will cost approximately \$1 million dollars, with half that amount already received or pledged.

Many people played key roles in the success of the evening, including Fr. Joe Nguyen C.S.Sp., Fr. Michael Begley, C.S.Sp., Fr. Trinh Le, C.S.Sp., Fr. Joe's sister, Anh, and Elizabeth Cantu, Business Manager, Spiritan Office for Mission Advancement (SOMA).



## Spiritan priests celebrate long-term Professions

**Fr. Joe Kelly, C.S.Sp.** (at right) celebrated 70 years of Profession to the priesthood on August 15, 2015. A native of Sayville, NY, he made his first profession on August 15, 1945 at Ridgefield, CT, and was ordained on September 15, 1950. He now resides at the Spiritan Center in Bethel Park, PA, where he has lived in retirement since 2003. His first appointment was to Kilimanjaro in 1951 where he began a missionary vocation that spanned 52 years in Africa. Assignments included ministry in the missions of Uru, Kilomeni, Sambarai, Usa River and Sinon in Arusha; teaching at Singa Chini Teachers College, pastor at Mbosho Mission, Chaplain at Assumpta Secondary School; and Director of Development at Catholic University of Eastern Africa. He was also active in the Diocese of Moshi, Nairobi, where he served as Director and started a diocesan paper, founded the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) Documentation Service, which was sent to 42 countries and served 90 AMECEA dioceses in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.



The Spiritan approach to ministry in Africa - spiritual, emotional, and corporal - guided Fr. Kelly's work. He helped establish mission stations, schools, and small hospitals in many centers. Some became advanced institutions, including seminaries for training priests, and a university in Nairobi. Fr. Kelly felt that "Unlike people in the business world who want to make themselves indispensable, the task of the missionary is to make himself unnecessary". He often wrote articles about African issues for the Catholic News Service and ran media workshops.

The friendship with an underprivileged African-American child helped stir Fr. Kelly's vocation, and he has been passionate about Africa and its people ever since. He is proud that "the Catholic Church has played an important part in the human rights education needed for self-government and helped in developing the mind, heart, body and economy, in addition to the spiritual, which ties it all together", and is blessed to have been an eyewitness to countless changes in the Church and in East Africa where many of the countries are gaining their independence and working toward their freedom. Fr. Kelly refers to his vocation as a gift given him by God.

Celebrating their 50th anniversary of religious profession on August 22, 2015 with a special celebration of the Eucharist in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel were Spiritan priests **Fr. Christopher Promis** and **Fr. Edward Vilkauskas**. A festive lunch with the Pittsburgh Spiritan community at the Spiritan Center in Bethel Park PA followed. They gathered with classmates from their novitiate class who came from Northern Ontario, Toronto, Ohio, Virginia, Connecticut and different areas of Pennsylvania to share stories and celebrate how God has worked in their lives. They were all enthusiastic about the gathering and the chance to renew their experience.

**Fr. Vilkauskas** (below, left) served many years in parish ministry across the U.S. including Our Lady of Lourdes in Monroe, NC and Old St. Mary's in Detroit, in addition to being Director of Evangelization for the Diocese of Charlotte. He is currently chaplain to the Sisters of Christian Charity at Holy Family Convent in Danville, PA.



He is currently chaplain to the Sisters of Christian Charity at Holy Family Convent in Danville, PA.

**Fr. Promis** (at right) worked for 20 years in Tanzania where he served in formation and leadership posts in East Africa, and was provincial of the U.S. East province from 1994-2000. He is currently assigned as novice master in Trinidad where he is accompanying young candidates preparing to take the same commitment he made 50 years ago.



## Comings and Goings

On September 28th, the Libermann Hall community and the staff at the Spiritan Center in Bethel Park gathered for a farewell luncheon for Virginia Sedor who is retiring from her service to the Spiritan community after twenty-five years. Virginia began her service to the Congregation in a support role on a part-time basis in 1990 and became indispensable to the province when she became Administrative Assistant to the Provincial in 1997.

Having worked with six provincials during her time in the provincial offices, she is known for her dedication and loyalty to the Congregation and helpful nature for all confreres. She will be greatly missed as she begins this new chapter in her life as she moves to Canfield, Ohio to be closer to her daughter and grandchildren. We wish her all the best.



Virginia's successor, Susan Speer, began her service to the province on August 13, 2015. Susan is a member of St. Thomas More Parish in Bethel Park and had been working as the Parish Secretary in her home parish for the past two and a half years. Originally from the Washington, D.C. area, she moved to the Pittsburgh area in 2000 where she started a family and had helped to run a family business. She is eminently qualified and comes to us with many high recommendations. We are pleased to welcome Susan to the province in her new role as Administrative Assistant to the Provincial and wish her well in her new position.

## Birthday Blessings

<u>October</u>		<u>November</u>		<u>December</u>	
1	Fr. Peter Osuji	16	Fr. Brandon B. Nguyen	5	Fr. Simon T. Nguyen
4	Fr. Christopher P. Promis	17	Fr. Gregory Olikeanyi	12	Fr. Simon Lobon
12	Fr. Chris H. McDermott	18	Fr. Binh T. Quach	12	Fr. Thomas P. Tunney
21	Fr. Duc G. Luong	20	Fr. Silvio A. D'Ostilio	14	Fr. Joshua Otusafo
27	Fr. William H. Christy	23	Fr. James H. Burnie	17	Fr. Gilbert Tairo
27	Fr. Norbert T. Rosso	25	Fr. Michael Begley	28	Fr. Jeffrey T. Duaiame
		27	Bro. Michael E. Suazo	21	Fr. David T. Cottingham

### Membership Directory Updates & Changes

*Please make the following changes/updates to your Membership Directory*

Pg. C-14: new email address for HERZSTEIN, Joseph M. - [hjmcssp@gmail.com](mailto:hjmcssp@gmail.com)

Pgs. C-24, D-4, D-15: new address for PROMIS, Christopher P. - R.C. Presbytery, Holy Trinity Church, Eastern Main Road, Arouca, Trinidad and Tobago, WEST INDIES



**NED'S MISSION**  
Spiritans Maasailand Tanzania  
Congregation of the Holy Spirit

### Catechist Family Meeting

*Fr. Ned Marchessault, C.S.Sp.*

Last week my catechists and their wives gathered here at the mission for a week of discussions, presentations and time together. They came on Sunday evening and returned to their homes on Friday. One of the subjects of discussion was polygamy. Usually, catechists say that they commit to having only one wife. In many cases, after a few years, some do take a second wife. This is not something that is discussed often among the teachers themselves. The teachers and their wives never discuss this issue. Last week it was brought into the open and the women had a chance to express their views. Some had very strong opinions about the possibility of their husbands taking a second wife.

Among the Maasai, who normally live a precarious life out on the plains, having more than one woman in the family “boma” makes for a stronger family and enables them to keep going in times of difficulty. When the mother in a family gets sick or incapacitated for some reason and she is the only woman there, the family can fall apart. The responsibilities of the woman are endless. It is her job to go for firewood and water, to care for the children, cook the food and build the house. Normally, she will push her husband to look for a second wife so that the family can become stronger and more stable and more prepared to handle trouble when it comes, as it inevitably will. The catechists, who receive a salary, although a minimal one, are not living quite so near the “edge” as many others. No firm conclusions were reached about polygamy, but the discussions were heated and some mutual understandings were achieved.

Another series of heated discussions took place around the issue of the “Laibon,” the Maasai witch doctor. Early on in the middle 70’s when the first Maasai priests were ordained, those new priests made the decision that a Christian must not go to the “Laibon” for help. The problem is that some situations are not resolved by traditional Maasai medicine or modern medicine. These difficulties end up being dealt with by the “Laibon.” To follow the dictates of the Maasai priests means that a family in which the woman cannot conceive a child, for example, is left with no place to go for help. Over the years this has been a bone of contention, with some going to the “Laibon” anyway and others not. This week there were strong views expressed on both sides and long discussions. As with the issue of polygamy, the question was not resolved, although much healthy give and take took place.

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We slaughtered a goat on Thursday, marking the end of our week together. It was really a great party with succulent roast goat and soda for everyone. The heated discussions and controversies were put aside for the moment.

