

SCJ NEWS

a newsletter of the U.S. Province of the Priests of the Sacred Heart

February 2012

In this issue...

Congregation's eldest bishop dies, p. 2

From the missions to general administration and state foreign service, p. 4

A truly international congregation, p. 6



Students in the Philippines cut up coconuts in preparation for a meal. SCJs, novices and candidates from Vietnam and India join Philippine students in the SCJs' international formation programs there.

"This is an excellent opportunity to share the lived reality of the Priests of the Sacred Heart in other parts of the world."

-Br. Long Nguyen, SCJ

SCJ takes ESL training to Asia

After earning a teaching certificate last year from the Wisconsin English as a Second Language Institute (WESLI) Br. Long Nguyen, SCJ, is doing to do a bit of a "practicum."

"I had been helping with the ESL program at Sacred Heart School of Theology," said Br. Long, who emphasized that his work was generally with the non-academic portions of the program, not teaching itself. "I started to think that maybe I had an aptitude for teaching. The province allowed

me to enroll in WESLI last January and earn my teaching certification."

However, in the midst of his classes his assignment changed. Last spring Br. Long was asked to join the team at the province vocation office.

"But when he gave me the assignment Fr. Cassidy [provincial superior] said that it would be with the understanding that I would still put my ESL training to use," said Br. Long.

Br. Long is teaching ESL, but instead of at SHST he went to the Philippines where the SCJs have an

international student program. He is there for a month at the beginning of the year assisting with one of the three-week ESL sessions for SCJ students.

English has become a common language in many of the SCJs' Asian communities, and it is often the language of higher education. However, most Asian students are new to English, or only have a rudimentary knowledge of it.

Several SCJs from the U.S. Province have gone to the Philippines to assist with the district's ESL program. As Fr. Bernie Rosinski, SCJ, noted when he went last year, "The students hear English with Brazilian, Argentine, Italian, Polish and Indonesian accents. They seemingly hear every kind of English except that of a native speaker."

The Philippine mission is a very international one. The district superior is Brazilian and the district secre-



Br. Long Nguyen, SCJ

tary is Polish. English is the working language of the district but none of the district's members is a native English speaker.

Although his family is of Vietnamese descent, Br. Long grew up in Louisiana (he was born just across the Louisiana border in Port Arthur, Texas) and brings to the Philippines not only his teaching skills, but a slight southern drawl as well. Br. Long speaks Vietnamese ("casual Vietnamese," he clarified), but English is his first language.

"I'm looking forward to using my teaching skills, but I am also excited to travel overseas for the first time and get a better sense of the international congregation," said Br. Long. "And I love to meet new people and learn about different realities."

He added that "it's funny, my family is Vietnamese, but this will be the first time that I will be in Asia." It is his first experience of an SCJ community outside of North America.

Most of the students in Br. Long's ESL session are from Vietnam, so his Vietnamese language skills will come in handy.

As did Fr. Bernie, Br. Long will be working with an ESL teacher who has directed the SCJs' English program in the Philippines for several years. Br. Long said that he received the syllabus for the class and much of it was "a format that I was familiar with; it is the style that I learned when I got my teaching certificate."

During his time in the Philippines Br. Long hopes to continue his ministry with the vocation office as well by sharing with potential candidates some of what he experiences of the SCJs' mission in the Philippines.

"There are several people I have been accompanying on their vocational journey," he said. "As they discern their own vocation they often ask questions about mine and how it is lived and how it has evolved. This is an excellent opportunity to share with them, and others, more about

our international community; more about the lived reality of the Priests of the Sacred Heart in other parts of the world."

Besides following in the footsteps of Fr. Bernie and other SCJs from the U.S. Province, Br. Long will also follow in the footsteps of his novitiate classmate Br. Brian Tompkins, SCJ, from the Canadian Region. Br. Brian

did his final vows program in the Philippines.

"He has had many positive things to say about the Philippines; he loved his experience there," said Br. Long. "Although he keeps trying to scare me with stories about the large bugs he saw there, but I'm from Louisiana's bayou country. I've seen plenty of bugs already!"

SCJs' eldest bishop dies

Dutch SCJ was truly a citizen of the world

Bishop Evert Baaij, SCJ, retired bishop of Aliwal North, South Africa, died January 31. He passed away at Nazareth House, a senior living community in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Struggling with heart issues in his last days, the bishop was surrounded in his final hours by many of the religious sisters whom he knew at Nazareth.

At 90, Bishop Baaij was the eldest bishop in the congregation. A member of the Priests of the Sacred Heart since 1942 (this year he would have celebrated his 70th anniversary of profession!), Bishop Baaij was born in the Netherlands, became a citizen of Canada, was a member of the U.S. Province but has called South Africa his home for the past 55 years.

"I'm a citizen of the world," he joked during a 2010 interview. Most of the quotes that follow are from that interview.

Bishop Baaij was introduced to the Catholic Church by a childhood friend. The friend told the young



Bishop Evert Baaij, SCJ, photographed in 2010

Evert that he was going to "tell his sins to the priest." The bishop said that to an eight-year-old the idea of telling an adult "what you did wrong" sounded odd. "What punishment would he get for whatever he had confessed?"

Seeing his friend coming out of the confessional happy and smiling he decided to find out a bit more about the Catholic Church. He went to Mass with the friend and was so impressed by the sacredness of the celebration "that I decided that I wanted to become a priest," said Bishop Baaij.

His parents gave him permission

to take catechism classes while attending public school and his vocational call grew. He considered the diocesan seminary, but tuition was too high for a family just rebuilding after losing its business to the Depression. But then Providence stepped in via a knock on the family's door. An SCJ was selling calendars as a fund-raiser. The young Evert told the SCJ about his desire to be a priest and the SCJ invited him to come to the SCJ seminary.

Not long after that calendar sale, Bishop Baaij was studying with the SCJ community in Helmond. Among his classmates were two other men who eventually went on to become bishops: Joseph Soudant, who became bishop of Palembang, Indonesia, and Paul Verschuren, who became bishop of Helsinki, Finland.

From the Netherlands to the rest of the world

Evert Baaij was ordained a priest on July 20, 1947. After his ordination, he went to France for language studies in preparation for an assignment in French Canada. He arrived in Canada in 1949. There, he had his first experience with hospital chaplaincy, a ministry that has remained close to his heart.

Soon after his arrival in Canada, Bishop Baaij was transferred to the SCJ minor seminary in Delaware, Ontario. Besides teaching, he provided pastoral care to a sanatorium near London, Ontario, from 1952 to 1954. In 1955, Evert Baaij became a Canadian citizen.

Two years later, he moved to the United States to teach at the SCJ seminary in Honesdale, Penn., where he taught Latin, Greek and physics. But when it was learned that he didn't have the appropriate documents to work in the United States it was suggested that the bishop consider South Africa.

At the time, it was difficult for an American citizen to get a visa for South Africa. But since the bishop was a citizen of Canada, he didn't

need a visa. Just as he said yes to the call to go to North America, he said yes to the missions in South Africa.

Bishop Baaij arrived in South Africa in March, 1957, and began ministry in Middelburg. He later served in Noupoort and in Colesberg. Because of apartheid laws, which were still in force in South Africa until 1994, the people he served were segregated into black, "colored" (the South African term for people of a mixed racial background) and white churches. Bishop Baaij attended to all, moving from church to church.

When the apartheid laws ended, he added South African citizenship to his Canadian citizenship.

In 1974, Pope Paul VI named him bishop of Aliwal North, South Africa. His bishop's shield carried the Latin words: *Veni Creator* (Come, O Creator). Bishop Baaij said that he chose it because "God is the creator of the universe and we are God's co-creators."

Bishop Baaij served as bishop of Aliwal North until 1981 when health concerns prompted him to resign.

A new chapter

After his resignation, Bishop Baaij spent time in a rehabilitation facility to regain his health. He said that he knew that it was a time of transition, "but at first I didn't know what I was transitioning to."

He continued, saying that "life is a process of letting go, which will lead to new beginnings in hope." He found his "new beginning" in the ministry with which he first fell in love years earlier in Canada — hospital chaplaincy.

Since the mid-1980s Bishop Baaij has lived in the Diocese of Port Eliza-



The bishop doing the ministry he loved, serving as a chaplain. He continued ministry even as he turned 90.

beth where he has served as a chaplain to several hospitals and mental health institutions. Prior to his move to Port Elizabeth, he helped to establish two hospices in the KwaZulu-Natal Province in South Africa.

In recent years the bishop had to reduce his workload. Occasionally he took time away from his duties as chaplain to Nazareth House to attend to his own health concerns. But as he was able, he continued to minister to the elderly and sick.

"I should have retired years earlier," he said, "these years in 'retirement' have been the best of my life!"

The SCJ NEWS is published by the U.S. Province of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (SCJs). Articles, photos and suggestions are always welcome. Editorial offices are located at P.O. Box 289, Hales Corners, WI 53130-0289 (414) 427-4266. Email: marygorski@sbcglobal.net Mary Gorski, editor. Postage prepaid.





Fr. Claudio Siebenaler, SCJ, speaking at the 2011 European Conference. The gathering was held at a conference center in Belgium that used to house his boyhood high school.

Short visit led to a 30-year commitment to Rome

It's not so important what you are doing but how you are doing it. If you do a job with love and joy, that's what is important. Not the particular job itself."

The quote comes from Fr. Claude ("Claudio") Siebenaler, SCJ, as he reflected on his 30 years in Rome. It has been 30 years in a place he never expected to find himself, in jobs he never considered as a young priest getting ready for the missions.

Originally from Luxembourg, Fr. Claudio, 66, was ordained in 1972 and soon after, began Spanish studies in preparation for ministry in Chile. He expected to spend most of his religious life there.

He arrived in Chile in 1973 and for the first five years was based in

the rural south doing parish ministry. "It was very interesting, I loved it," he said. "We were in areas where there were no other priests or religious. We worked together as a team, each helping the other in several parishes. It was a very good time for me."

After five years among the poor, Fr. Claudio did a 180-degree turn and went to Santiago where he was at one of the wealthiest parishes in Chile. "It was very different for me but also good to find balance in the extremes," he said.

A longer detour than planned

In December, 1981, Fr. Claudio went home to Luxembourg for a vaca-

tion. On the way he made what he thought would be a short detour to Rome to visit friends. Little did he know that he would be making a more permanent detour to the Generalate.

"The general secretary at the time asked me to work with him for a year and then take his place," said Fr. Claudio. Doing so was the furthest thing from Fr. Claudio's thoughts but then Fr. General made the same request. Fr. Claudio went back to Chile after his vacation, but only to pack up his belongings and say good-bye.

In January, 1982, he moved to Rome. Except for vacations and work-related travels, he has been there ever since.

"It was hard to leave a place I enjoyed; the people and ministries in Chile," said Fr. Claudio. "But availability is a part of our charism. It is who we are as SCJs. If you are needed, well ok, that is good. Being where I am needed is where I should be.

"In some ways I am still a missionary just as I was in Chile. But now I am a missionary to the Generalate."

Another good-bye

Once again Fr. Claudio is saying good-bye. But this time it isn't to a place, but to a job. For the past 13 years Fr. Claudio has been the SCJs' procurator to the Holy See. It is the job he assumed after serving as general secretary for 16 years. As of January 1, Fr. José Carlos Briñón Domínguez, SCJ, a member of the Region of Venezuela, took on the job of procurator, as well as postulator.

[For those not familiar with the job titles, a "procurator" deals with the Vatican's Secretary of State and various departments of the Roman Curia on behalf of a religious order. The "postulator" is the person who guides the cause for the beautification or canonization of a person. The Priests of the Sacred Heart have had one person named "blessed" (Fr. Juan Maria de la Cruz, SCJ) and Fr. Leo John

“It’s not so important what you are doing but how you are doing it. If you do a job with love and joy, that’s what is important. Not the particular job itself.”

-Fr. Claudio Siebenaler, SCJ

Dehon, SCJ founder, has been named venerable.]

Fr. Claudio is also saying goodbye to another job that he has held for many years while in Rome: ecclesiastical councilor of the embassy of Luxembourg to the Holy See.

Luxembourg does not have a full-time ambassador to the Vatican. As ecclesiastical councilor, Fr. Claudio not only advised Luxembourg government officials about questions regarding the Catholic Church, but also attended to some of the more mundane administrative tasks of an embassy.

For many years, Fr. Claudio’s office served as the mailbox for Luxembourg’s embassy to the Vatican. “I would open the mail, answer what I could and then forward anything of importance to the ambassador,” said Fr. Claudio. The archives of the Luxembourg embassy? “It’s right there,” said Fr. Claudio, pointing to a file cabinet in the corner of his office at the Generalate.

Being a member of the diplomatic corps came with a few perks, including diplomatic license plates (allowing Fr. Claudio far more parking options than most Romans), and attendance at state events, often with a front seat to significant ceremonies and events at the Vatican.

And when the grand duke of Luxembourg made a visit, it was Fr. Claudio who did the preparations and

then escorted Luxembourg’s head of state to the Vatican. Periodically, the visits were with the pope.

Through his years of service Fr. Claudio became not only a dependable employee of Luxembourg’s diplomatic service, but a good friend to the grand duke’s family. Fr. Claudio’s office is filled with photos of Crown Prince Henri, his wife and their children. You’ll find Fr. Claudio in a few of them.

Now, as Fr. Claudio steps down from the job of procurator to the Holy See, he also leaves the diplomatic corps. After months of searching, another person was finally found to assume Fr. Claudio’s duties with the Luxembourg embassy. Without even a hint of boastfulness Fr. Claudio said that it wasn’t an easy position to fill. There are not a lot of unemployed Luxembourg diplomats with extensive knowledge of the Catholic Church living in Rome. It’s not an exaggeration to say that Fr. Claudio has a unique skill set.

A new role

As noted, Fr. Claudio is leaving jobs that he has held for many years in Rome, but not the Generalate itself. He will remain in Rome to help complete the electronic version of the writings of Fr. Dehon.

“It would be a loss to the commu-

nity if he were to leave,” said a member of the General Council. “He has an encyclopedic knowledge of Rome and is the first person one consults at the Generalate on the history, people, popes, buildings, streets, piazzas and the events of Rome.”

He is also a walking handbook on church administration, often serving as a reference for the general secretaries who have followed him, including the current secretary, Fr. Heru Ismadi, SCJ.

“I am always grateful for his availability,” said Fr. Heru of his predecessor.

Fr. Claudio has served three superior generals (Frs. Antonio Panthegini, Virginio Bressanelli and José Ornelas Carvalho). Through his years of ministry in Chile, and then Rome, he has learned at least a half dozen languages (though he claims — in perfect English — that he only really speaks his native Luxembourgish). And as noted earlier, he has developed a unique and diverse set of skills that few could replicate.

“My time here has been very good,” concluded Fr. Claudio. “Just as in Chile we have very good teamwork here. There is a sense of support. I need community and the people here carry me. I have been very lucky.”



Fr. Claudio Siebenaler talks about the history of the Basilica of St. Paul’s Outside the Walls in Rome. Delegates at the 2009 General Chapter toured the basilica during a retreat day away from meetings.

A worldwide religious congregation

The last issue of the *SCJ News* highlighted several SCJs who have taken part in Sacred Heart School of Theology's ESL (English as a Second Language) program in preparation for international ministry. In this issue, we began with a feature on Br. Long Nguyen, SCJ, a member of the U.S. Province spending a month teaching ESL in the Philippine District. A remembrance of Bishop Evert Baaij, SCJ, another member of the U.S. Province, who served in South Africa for over 50 years, follows that story. And on page 4 is a feature on Fr. Claudio Siebenaler, SCJ, a native of Luxembourg who came to Rome via the missions in Chile.

These stories give just a hint at the truly international nature of the Priests of the Sacred Heart. The congregation is now found on five continents and over 40 countries. What follows are brief news items from a few of those countries.

European Dehonian educators meet in Rome

Approximately 30 representatives of SCJ colleges and secondary schools met in Rome January 19-21 to discuss common issues of concern as well as the influence and history of Dehonian spirituality in education. The congregation sponsors a variety of schools in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain, including the internationally well-regarded ESIC business and marketing school in Spain (www.esic.es).

Education was not only a strong value for Fr. Dehon, but also the founding ministry of the Priests of the Sacred Heart. The first SCJ apostolate was a Catholic high school in France.

In recent years there has been a push to revisit and revitalize the ed-

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educational component of the congregational conferences were held in Salamanca, Spain in 2001 and 2008, and this year's general conference in Germany will also focus on education. SCJs will look at the more encompassing idea of education of Dehonian values, not just in schools, but in the wide variety of contexts in which the SCJs find themselves. Special focus will be on youth.

Brazilian students renew vows in the Philippines

Fraters Jonathan Schneiders, SCJ and Sergio Matumoto, SCJ, renewed their vows on January 22 in Cagayan de Oro, Philippines. The two Brazilians were featured in the last issue



Fr. Jonathan Schneiders, SCJ

of the *SCJ News* (their story can be found at www.sacredheart.org). They are doing their seminary studies in the Philippines in preparation for future ministry in the country.

"The ceremony was presided over by Fr. Donald, SCJ, and concelebrated by our dear Fr. Bene, SCJ, our district superior," wrote Fr. Jonathan who added that the vows were done in Portuguese, the native language of the students, as well as Fr. Bene, who is also from Brazil.

"The chapel was lovingly decorated by seminarians from Vietnam," he continued, "there were beautiful songs by our 54 trainees who graced the celebration with their thunderous choruses. Grace, one of our lay Filipino SCJs, was part of the celebration and sang a beautiful song especially for the occasion." Also a part of the day was Br. Long Nguyen, SCJ, who, as noted earlier, was in the Philippines teaching.

"Sergio and I are very grateful and happy for the calling of God," wrote Br. Jonathan. "We have been accepted and well-received in this country and this SCJ community. We give special thanks to our provincial superior and council in Brazil who allowed us to be here to live in the spirit of Sint Unum."

The challenge of formation in a digital era

Formators — SCJs who help to prepare candidates and professed students for religious life and priesthood — met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia at the end of January to discuss the challenges and opportunities of preparing men for religious life in the digital age.

"The theme for this meeting came from a concern expressed by formators in regards to how a world driven by fast-moving information technology influences the lives of our young candidates," said one of the SCJ organizers.

Dr. Tjipto Susana ("Dr. Sue" as she is generally known) from the Psychology Department of Sanata Dharma University was the keynote speaker at the conference. She is a well-regarded researcher on the effects of technology in inter-generational settings. She noted how technology shapes a user's way of interpreting the world and establishing values. "Even my youngest son, aged six, decided to save his pocket-money to get a touch screen Samsung cell phone!" she told the SCJs. Technology impacts people at just about every age.

Formators were encouraged to evaluate their own use of technology and reflect on how they are impacted by it. "They need to reflect on themselves first before being able to guide and give wisdom to students," said a presenter.

Four ordinations in Congo

On January 22, four SCJs were ordained to the priesthood for the Congolese Province: Frs. Antoine Twal, Gustave Mania, Aegis Safari, and Jean-Pierre Mokonzi. Present for



Fr. Jean-Pierre Mokonzi, SCJ

the ordinations was Fr. José Ornelas Carvalho, SCJ, superior general, who was in the midst of a visitation of the province. Archbishop Marcel Utambi

Tapa of Kisangani was the ordaining bishop.

Anniversary celebrated

On January 17, Sacred Heart Seminary in Corupà, in southern Brazil, celebrated its 80th anniversary. Special events will be held throughout the year to commemorate the institution and its service to the Church.

District becomes a region

The Priests of the Sacred Heart have three basic administrative structures outside of the General Curia: districts, regions and provinces. Most entities begin as a district. As they gain greater self sufficiency they often evolve toward becoming a region and/or province.

The congregation first went to the Philippines in 1989; ten years later the general administration established a district in the country.

In November, "the General Council approved our request to become a region," wrote Fr. Benedito de Mores Machado, SCJ, who was district superior at the time the request was made.

"We were looking forward to and working toward this moment for a long time and now our dream has come true," he continued. "We are aware that this would never have happened without the help and support of other entities of the congregation, among them the U.S. Province, which has always been generous to us. On this occasion, we want to say 'Thank you' for your friendship and patronage, for your financial support and for being with us."

The new (and first) regional administration will be put in place on March 14, 2012, the anniversary of the birth of Fr. Leo John Dehon. Fr. Tom Cassidy, SCJ, will be among those present at the ceremony.

The U.S. Province hosted the first group of SCJ missionaries preparing for the Philippines and has continued to offer financial, educational and personnel assistance to the district.

SCJ NEWS

New wing takes shape

As you can see from the photo below, the second stage of Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake is quickly taking shape. This section will include the "Main Street" area (a large chapel, dining and recreation room, coffee shop, banking and other facilities) as well as apartments for the general public aged 55 and better.



The second wing at SHML is taking shape!

A (so far) mild winter has helped to keep builders on schedule. If all goes as planned the new wing of the complex will be ready for occupancy this summer. SCJs moved into the first wing last July.

For information about apartment rentals call 414-427-4230.

Former Lay Missioner dies

Maria Galang, who was a member of the now defunct Sacred Heart Lay Missioner program, died in December. As a lay missioner, Maria worked at St. Joseph's Retreat Center in Baileys Harbor, Wis.

"My ministry was indirect yet very rewarding," said Maria in a 1998 interview. "I never thought of what I was doing as ministry until retreatants began coming up to me and telling me how I had made their retreat better. I arranged the flowers in the chapel and people came and thanked me, telling me that the flowers were beautiful, that they helped them be prayerful. One woman told me that it was simply my smile that helped her to see Jesus.

"I never thought of such things as 'ministering' but they are. They are indirect. It is these little things that we do each day that help people. It is through these little things that we all can 'minister.'"

Provincial Secretary named

There is a new face at the Provincial Offices. As of February 1 Fr. Terry Langley, SCJ, is the province secretary. Prior to packing up his car and driving to Milwaukee on January 30, Fr. Terry, 61, was pastor of Queen of Peace parish in Olive Branch, Miss. He served there since 2005. Queen of Peace will now become a part of the cluster of parishes served by a pastoral team moderated by Fr. Bob Tucker, SCJ. The cluster includes Holy Spirit in Hernando, Good Shepherd in Robinsonville, St. Gregory in Senatobia and Christ the King in Southaven.



Fr. Terry Langley, SCJ

With a father in the Marines, Fr. Terry called many places home when growing up. It was during his family's stay in Norfolk, Va., that he learned about the SCJs. "One day our teacher gave us some vocational literature about the Priests of the Sacred Heart," he said. Something about the literature attracted him and "that was that!"

He attended Divine Heart Seminary in Donaldson, Ind., professed his first vows in 1969 and was ordained to the priesthood ten years later. He has served in parish ministry in Houston and Detroit, and done post-graduate studies at Boston's Weston School of Theology.

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