



Las Servidoras

Newsletter of the Houses of Formation of the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará,
Province of the Immaculate Conception: United States, Canada and Guyana



Summer/Fall 2008

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“For he who has become your husband is your Maker; His name is the LORD of Hosts” (Is 54:5)



At the Crypt of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Saturday, Oct. 11, 2008, six of our sisters professed their final vows and ten other sisters professed their first vows of poverty, manifesting that God is the only true wealth for man; chastity, for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven; obedience, even to death on the cross, and a fourth vow of consecration to Mary in maternal slavery of love. This was the first big group of sisters in the United States to be officially incorporated into our Religious Community by the bonds of perpetual profession. These sisters are the fruits of fourteen years of a missionary presence in the United States – understandably this was a special and blessed occasion for our community. The Crypt was packed with family, friends, benefactors, Third Order Members of our Religious Family, Sisters, Seminarians and Priests. Mother María de la Consolata, our

General Vicar, a member of the General Council of the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará, and Fr. Diego Pombo, a member of the General Council of the Institute of the Incarnate Word and our Spiritual Father, came from Rome to celebrate this wondrous occasion with us.

Fr. Pombo, along with many other IVE and diocesan priests, concelebrated the Holy Mass with his Eminence Theodore Cardinal McCarrick. In his homily, his Eminence spoke of the three stages of God’s call, in accordance with the Gospel reading. He mentioned the importance of familiarizing ourselves to the voice of Our Lord by constant prayer; the importance of having a spiritual guide to help us discern whether it is truly God that calls and how to respond; and lastly, with God’s grace, the importance of responding with the same words as the prophet Samuel did, “Speak Lord, your servant is listening” (Samuel 3:1-10).



Sisters prostrating during the Litany of the Saints



For most of our guests, this was their first time to witness the ceremony of the profession of final vows and the reception of the three insignias of religious profession of perpetual profession. The wedding ring is a sign of the perpetually professed sister and her espousal to Jesus Christ; the crown is a prefigurative sign of the crown which she hopes to receive from Jesus Christ; and the Constitutions are a sign of the incorporation of the perpetually professed sister into her religious institute. For the novices, to signify their total, exclusive consecration to Christ, their white veils are replaced by the blue veil.

There are no words to express our profound gratefulness to Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for His benevolence to His Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará. Please continue to pray that we may remain His faithful spouses and loyal servants. Please know that you are all in our prayers. May our Blessed Mother, Star of Evangelization, wrap you in her mantle of love and protection.

Fruits of the 2008 Summer Missions

St. John the Baptiste de la Salle, Chillum, Maryland, June 11-22



After each morning's Holy Hour and Mass, the missionaries began the rigorous schedule of door-to-door house visits, oratory for children, youth group activities, special visits to the sick and the elderly, daily Rosary procession through the neighborhoods, and sermons preached each night. The mission culminated with a Eucharistic procession, the blessing of the Mission Cross, and a lively reception in a spirit of thanksgiving.

One of the many graces of the mission came to a man who had been Catholic for many years but had been unaware of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. However, when this truth of our faith was explained to him, he believed immediately with confidence and was literally brought to his knees in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Indeed, this is the purpose of the popular missions: to bring men and women closer to Christ in a very real encounter with Him, especially through the sacraments. We thank God for this time of grace and entrust to His care the parish family of St. John the Baptiste de la Salle.



Children's songs at St. John Cantius

that He has a great love for each one of them.

One particular twelve-year old girl ended up coming to the mission every day. Finding it a safe place to be, she became friends with the sisters and for the first time learned about God. She confided to one of the sisters that she was no longer afraid to die now that she knew that she could go to Heaven. She expressed an ardent desire for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and developed a love for the saints especially St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Please pray

Sisters from the Juniorate in Washington, DC and from the Novitiate in Upper Marlboro, MD joined IVE seminarians and novices to participate in the popular mission preached by Fr. Mariano Varela, IVE.

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Blessing of the Mission Cross at St. John Baptiste de la Salle

St. John Cantius, East New York, Brooklyn, June 10-23

This year in preparing for the popular mission in Brooklyn, the pastor chose to emphasize catechesis and social activities for the parishioners to build up and rejuvenate the faith community that already existed in the parish.

One visible fruit of the mission was the work with the children in the daily oratory. We led them in games, skits, songs, and arts and crafts that centered around faith and virtue. The oratory's focus for this mission was to help the parish children come to a firm understanding of who God is as Father and Redeemer. Before long, however, the oratory attracted other children from up and down the streets of Brooklyn. Many of these children had never been told that God exists or

6th Annual IVE Catechetical Congress

Over the weekend of September 5-7, lay catechists from IVE parishes along with sisters from the houses of formation participated in the 6th annual IVE Catechetical Congress held at St Patrick's Retreat House in Upstate New York. Conferences were given by experienced catechists, sisters and lay volunteers, as well as by Father Alexis Moronta, IVE and Father Augustín Orellana, IVE.

- Parishes in attendance: St. George (CT), St. Killian (MA), St. Gabriel, (NY), St. Michael (NY), St. Paul (NY), St. Thomas Aquinas (NY), and St. Veronica (PA)
- Talks: "What is a catechist according to the saints who were educators?," "How to teach catechesis?," "Eucharist and the Sacraments"
- Spiritual Activities: Holy Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Holy Rosary, Confession, Liturgy of the Hours; Recreational Activities: Catechetical Jeopardy, Talent Show, Games, Skits, Musical Performances



This summer, Fr. Pablo Muñoz, IVE led a group of five sisters, five seminarians, and six lay volunteers for two popular missions in Guyana—the small Caribbean country on the northern coast of South America bordered by Venezuela, Surinam and Brazil.

Held in the parish of the IVE Fathers in Moruka, the first mission at Santa Rosa was marked by the ministry to the sick and to children. As the days passed, it became clear that the girls were thirsting for knowledge about consecrated life. When one was asked why she wanted to be a sister, she responded simply and without hesitation saying, “I want to be more like Christ and I want to bear His burden.” It seems that most of the girls are authentically seeking Christ and might truly be called to live in His intimacy. By the end of the week, there were several girls from the ages of 11 to 18 who had expressed serious interest in becoming sisters. After the final Mass of the mission, all the girls received scapulars and made the consecration to Mary according to St. Louis de Montfort. The attraction to religious life of these young women ended proved to be perhaps the most remarkable grace of the mission at Santa Rosa.



Then we went to Suddie, a village on the Essequibo coast. Here, instead of vocations, God gave conversions. One particularly astonishing case happened on our first day visiting the sick. Upon entering one hospital room, we saw a 19-year old Hindu boy who had tried to commit suicide by swallowing poison a week before and was now near death due to damage to his inner organs. He received a blessing but asked for nothing more, and so we continued to visit the rest of the patients. But just as we were leaving, the Hindu boy’s mother came after us and asked if we could go back to her son—he was requesting baptism. Apparently, he had been secretly visiting a Christian church for several weeks. After a quick catechism on salvation history, Fr. Pablo gave him the Sacraments. Four days after our visit, the boy experienced the miraculous disappearance of all poison from his body and as a result the boy was released from the hospital. Most of us had never seen such an extraordinary example of corporal healing; moreover, the doctors said that there was no reason he should still be alive. We ask for your prayers especially for the perseverance of those youth from the mission, for those newly converted, and for our missionary priests and sisters who live in Guyana and continue the labor of evangelization year-round.

IVE World Youth Day Pilgrimage to California and to Sydney, Australia

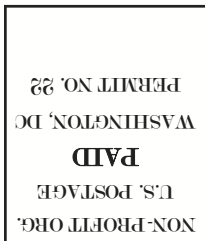


For most of the world, Australia seems like an interesting country so remote that one would not actually make the trek across the ocean. Yet, when the Holy Father announced he would be traveling there for World Youth Day, we realized that God would give the grace for thousands of youth to make the journey too. After months of finalizing plans and fundraisers, our IVE group of 150 pilgrims first met at Our Lady of Peace Parish (OLOP) in Santa Clara, California. We arrived on July 4th just in time to join the parishioners for a celebration of Independence Day. Families from OLOP graciously hosted pilgrims during the days of our journey through the great history of the Church in the California missions. A highlight was visiting the mission of Carmel and having Mass in the chapel where Bl. Junipero Serra lies. We also hiked through the Redwood Forest and enjoyed other natural beauties of California.

Once in Sydney, a group of 40 IVE pilgrims joined us from Taiwan. Since the World Youth Day theme centered on the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Holy Father reminded us of the gifts bestowed by the Sacraments and how the Holy Spirit descends to unite us as the Body of Christ. It was inspiring both to hear and to see in person the Holy Father, *Servus Servorum Dei*, the Servant of the Servants of God. Twice our group was blessed by seeing the Holy Father pass very close in the Popemobile.

On the final day of our trip, we had a chance to meet our sisters who had come with other groups of youth from Iceland, Holland, and Hong Kong at the Shrine of Australia’s first saint, Bl. Mary MacKillop. We ended the pilgrimage with Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Nieto, our Provincial Superior. We thank God for the gift of this pilgrimage and for the many fruits in the lives of the young pilgrims. We pray that He will bless those that will make the pilgrimage to the next World Youth Day in 2011 in Madrid.





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The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius

The Ignatian Exercises are silent retreats that the priests of our Religious Family preach throughout our province for men and women. Spiritual Exercises include any method of examination of conscience, meditation, contemplation, vocal, and mental prayer. Man was created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. The Spiritual Exercises are meant to prepare and dispose souls to remove inordinate attachments and then seek and find the will of God. The retreat includes daily Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Confession, and Spiritual Direction.

The upcoming Retreat for Young Women based on the Method/Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola in Pennsylvania will be from Friday, February 13 to Monday, February 16, 2009 and will be held at the Mary Immaculate Center, 300 Cherryville Rd, Northhampton, PA 18067. The cost will be \$150. For more information contact Sister Advocata Nostra or Sister Anáhuac at jun.ihm@servidoras.org or (202) 543-1179. For more information on other Ignatian Exercises preached by Priests of the Institute of the Incarnate Word and to register online please visit www.ignatianexercises.org

Details of the Upcoming Spiritual Exercises

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San Jose CA	Men	English	10/30/08-11/02/08
Guyana	Women	English	11/06/08-11/09/08
Guyana	Men	English	11/13/08-11/16/08
Toronto	Men	English	12/26/08-12/29/08
Toronto	Women	Spanish	12/26/08-12/29/08
Washington DC	Men	English	02/13/09-02/16/09
Pennsylvania	Women	English	02/13/09-02/16/09
New York	Men	English	05/14/09-05/17/09

