



finding grace

Discovering miracles in everyday experience

The following stories are excerpted and edited from *“Small Miracles, Extraordinary Stories of Ordinary People Touched by God,”* By Tom Sheridan, Zondervan, 1996

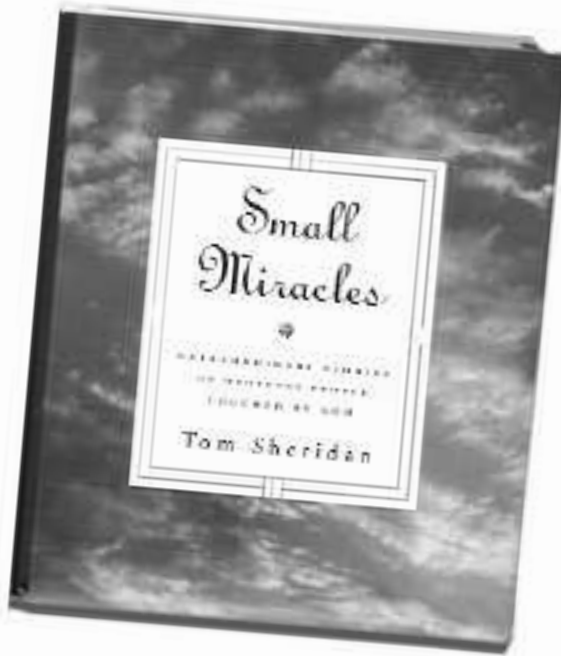
THE MIRACLE OF BEING LOST AND FOUND

The storyteller is Dorothy, a retired religious sister living in Charleston, W.Va. She was 98 years old when she told it.

“It happened years and years ago at a retreat house in Chicago. I was just a young sister, busy as a bee, trying to keep up with the hundreds of people who came morning, noon and night for prayer, meetings and the like. I was kept busy—and I don’t mean maybe.

“My assignment was to make dessert for all those people—sometimes two and three groups meeting at the same time in different rooms of the house. I was not a gifted cook, but I was blessed with good feet and could stand for most of the day. So my job became the preparation of dessert, a task that usually meant lots of mixing, stirring, and pouring. Not to mention hours of standing.

“Layer cake was our specialty. It was the easiest way to serve the greatest number of people. But it was nearly impossible to mix enough for so many groups—unless I did it all at the same time. Other duties—and prayers, of course—had to fit in, too. So I often worked late at night when it was quieter.



“With a wooden spoon—and with my arms up to the elbow—I mixed the gooey batter as quickly as possible. There was no time for mistakes; no time to do it over. Layers had to be poured into shallow pans, baked, then iced, one after another.

“Late one night, when I was especially pinched for time, I suddenly noticed that the wooden spoon I was using had broken. A big chunk was gone. I realized it was lost somewhere in the batter and was aghast at the potential implications. I tried to fish around with my hands in the big, batter-filled dishpan, but it was use-

less. I had no more time to waste; there were too many more cakes to bake.

“But later that night, lying in bed, I continued to worry about the lost piece of wooden spoon. Where was it? Someone could choke on the cake. Lord have mercy. Fearfully I watched all the next day as meal after meal, including cake, was served to all those people. Where, I wondered, was the piece of wood?”

But in the end, all Dorothy could do was pray—and apprehensively, at that.

So, what happened to that small piece of wooden spoon lost in the cake batter?

Sunday evening, after all the retreatants had gone home, the resident staff sat down to dinner. They served themselves the last few pieces of leftover cake. That small piece of wood, that piece of the spoons that had troubled the young sister so much throughout the weekend, finally turned up.

It was in the last piece of cake, served by the woman who had made the batter—served to herself.

She said she never forgot that moment: “I’m 98 years old now, and that was a long, long time ago. But I still remember. I said, ‘Thank you, God.’ And then I got goose bumps.

That was what 70 or 80 years ago? And she still remembers the good bumps.

It’s not as important what happens as it is that we recognize the hand of God in it. Paying attention to small miracles—and recognizing them as signs of the grace of God—will always promise goose bumps.

See Page 9a



MARYKNOLL

On the border

The call came near midnight. A young mother, dead. She perished giving birth to her first child. It was a complication that, four miles further north in Texas, would have slowed an otherwise normal delivery. In a Mexican slum, it was fatal. And a Maryknoll priest was called to pray over her body and comfort the family, even as they held her crying infant in their arms.

Now, somewhere in a Mexican slum on the Texas border, a little girl grows up without her mother.

Maryknoll is on that border too. And on other borders around the world that keep people poor, hungry, and starved of human dignity.

We are U.S. missionaries called to respond to a world in need.

Why? Because God's love knows no borders
Why? Because God's grace shines when we cross
the most difficult borders of all—borders of the

heart drawn by fear, ignorance, hatred and greed.

Join us on these borders
Step across them And find
God's grace in the arms of
distant peoples brought
near through love.

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For information, visit www.maryknoll.org
and www.mygiftcounts.org.

**'God's grace shines when we
cross the most difficult borders
of all—borders of the heart
drawn by fear, ignorance,
hatred and greed.'**

STAUROS

Finding grace in the midst of suffering

Stauros is not a commonplace word (in Greek it means "cross"), and Stauros U.S.A. is not a commonplace organization. Founded by the Congregation of the Passion, Stauros was created to help people find meaning, hope, and peace in the midst of suffering.

A major program is the publication of *Suffering: The Stauros Notebook*. This unique journal is published four times a year and is available in print version (articles, poems, and stunning artwork) or on CD (a retreat-like format combining articles with prayers and songs). Unlike academic journals, most articles are experiential, lending a sometimes raw and powerful feel. Yet it never dissolves into despair, always coming back to the hope that is ours through faith. Both formats are available by subscription.

In addition, Stauros U.S.A. promotes education by teaching classes and workshops on suffering, grief, illness, and ministry. They encourage reflection and prayer, offering missions and

retreats centered on the paschal mystery. They sponsor concerts of music for healing and compassion, and daily prayers with the Circle of Compassion prayer registry. The free monthly e-newsletter contains reflections and inspirational

**'Stauros was created to help
people find meaning, hope,
and peace in the midst of
suffering.'**

writings, along with Stauros news.

In all things, Stauros U.S.A. lives out Christ's mission of compassion to those most in need.

For more information on Stauros U.S.A. or to order a free issue of *Suffering*, call (773)484-0581, log onto www.stauros.org, or email amy@stauros.org.

BLUE ARMY

Blue Army plans prayer for families

With our own eyes we have seen the fulfillment of Our Lady's promises to the three shepherd children of Fatima, right up to the collapse of the Berlin Wall!

**'Our Lady calls us to pray
the rosary every day.'**

Our Lady calls us to pray the rosary every day, to do our daily duty in life and to offer all our sufferings "for poor sinners"

Now it is time to ask Mary, Our Mother: Please Mary, heal all our broken and hurting families. This is our plea on Oct. 6-8, 2006.

Oct. 6 is First Friday, and children from the

Catholic schools of the archdiocese will join for a Holy Hour with the rosary, prayers and songs at Holy Name Cathedral.

Oct. 7 is First Saturday and the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, the name she gave herself at Fatima. Families will join together for Mass and a Holy Hour at St. John Cantius Church.

Oct. 8 is Sanctity of Life Day as the World Apostolate of Fatima joins with the whole world to pray a billion rosaries for life!

Chicagoans will gather at St. Mary of the Angels for a Holy Hour and Mass starting at 6 p.m. Can you help gather 1 billion rosaries?

For more information, call the Blue Army-Chicago Center at (708) 489-6055 or e-mail chicagoba@sbcglobal.net.



finding grace

ST. BERNADETTE

St. Bernadette School finds grace in move

When the old St. Bernadette School building on Peterson Avenue was sold, the new owner stipulated that, after a 30-day grace period, we would have to pay an exorbitant daily fee. With haste and anxiety, we began to search for a new school building. All of our staff and friends were asked to pray for a successful transition. Twenty days into our search, we were still without a new home.

I was able to meet with Mayor Daley, who promised that a city employee would find some available properties for me. I was called with information about a building in Niles. By then, we had only four days to move out before the daily charges began. Thinking we were out of the woods, I called the building only to find out that the managers were on vacation. So, my hands were tied.

As it turned out, the managers returned from vacation on the day before we had to move out! We moved into our new building on the day before we would have had to start paying the daily late fees. I truly believe that God, in his providential care, brought St. Bernadette's School through this difficult time.

For information about St. Bernadette School call (847) 647-0518.

—Sister Maria Bernadette, Director

QUESTIONS FOR GOD

Children learn about God and salvation

The Lord has graciously allowed me to teach CCD for the past 20 years. I have seen how eager and ready the pre-school child is to learn about God. Most adults do not realize that spiritual formation begins at birth and is nurtured daily. Pre-

'I am amazed at how easily prayers are learned and how anxious the child is to learn about God.'

school children are not only ready but are eager to learn about God. I am amazed at how easily prayers are learned and how anxious the young child is to learn about God and his plan for our salvation. The years of teaching these precious children has led me to write a series of books that through beautiful illustrations and simple, truthful words tell God's story. This is children's theology that is appropriate for all ages. The series was written to share the joy that I have experienced as young children grow in their knowledge and love of God with as many as possible.

The series can be previewed at www.questionsforgod.info or call (708) 250-492 for more information.

—Peggy Olds, author of "Questions for God"

INTRAX

Share your time with an international student

There is a great opportunity for Chicagoans to share their lives with international students.

Intrax International Institute is looking for individuals, families, and couples to host our English as a Second Language students.

One of the best aspects of hosting through Intrax is that students choose to study at the school for varying durations of time. This means that you can host a student from Italy for part of the summer and then go visit them in their country for the other part of the summer!

Eligible host families are more diverse than you may think. Intrax does not have a "typical" host in mind when they screen eligible candidates. The families come from various backgrounds. What's most important is that the hosts are interested in cultural exchange and sharing their lives with international students who are really eager to learn about our culture.

Whether you are looking to give your family an engaging cultural experience or seeking to learn about another culture yourself, Intrax is a great option for those looking to expand their worldview.

For more information, please contact the housing coordinator, Rachel Felice, at (312) 236-3208 or e-mail her at rfelice@intraxinc.com.



CANTICLE BOOKS

Who Is God?

Everything I believe depends upon what I think of God. If my thoughts are small my faith will be small. I cannot hold God's greatness in a mind and heart that are narrow. I believe in a God so good that he has entered my life in a most intimate way.

I believe he took my nature to redeem it from within. He joined my nature to his divinity, and now would transform me to become like God. I believe that God is much more than the "prime mover" of the philosophers. He is more than a governor of the world. God is a lover, who has wedded me to himself in Jesus.

Thus, Jesus needed to be a God-man, conceived by the Holy Spirit. Jesus freely laid down his life for me to take it up again, that I might

be wedded to God forever. God is great enough to have done this thing. In a world that does not appreciate his love, I need to receive his light to sustain my faith in him as he really is.

'I cannot hold God's greatness in a mind and heart that are narrow.'

May God shed his light on my darkness, that his grace may shine through me into my world.

By Fr. Ronald Leinen, MSC

HOLY FAMILY VILLA

Holy Family Villa offers adoration

Holy Family Villa in Lemont is the only nursing home in the Chicago area that offers eucharistic adoration. Operated by Catholic Charities, the 100-bed skilled-care nursing facility was dedicated by Cardinal George upon its completion in 2001. Inside is the Anthony and Mary Rudis Chapel where daily Mass is held for residents, employees and family members.

Each Thursday after the morning Mass, the chapel offers adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It continues until 8 p.m. Friday Members of the surrounding communities are encouraged to spend time in devotional meditation with Our Lord, in addition to resi-

dents, their loved ones and employees. More than a dozen adorers go to this cozy chapel on a Thursday or Friday—adults and children. Many come from Lemont, Palos and other

neighboring areas to make a Holy Hour. The adoration program began on Dec. 12, 2005. By word of mouth, the number of adorers has increased, but there is a need for more. There are plans to increase the

'Each Thursday after the morning Mass, the chapel offers adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.'

number of days for adoration. Stop into this refreshing chapel where the graces flow to offer special prayer intentions. You may be inspired to become a recurring adorers. While in the neighborhood, visit the Poor Clare Monastery, too, which is less than a half-mile from Holy Family Villa.

THE PASSIONISTS

Prayer opens the heart to God

"The world is charged with the grandeur of God." So wrote Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, his words capturing the Catholic vision of life

'Only prayer can open our eyes to the vision of God and empower us to see the deepest truth about life and the world.'

But how do we discover that grandeur when so much of what we see in the world is violent, selfish and heartless, when our own illness or the death of a loved one challenges us profoundly? Prayer. Only prayer can open our eyes to the vision of God and empower us to see the deepest truth about life

and the world.

Jesus, in the midst of his own agony, as the brutal ugliness of the passion ensnares him, prayerfully clings to the Father. And the transformative result? Treasured words that point to the radical sacredness of people and life, "This day you will be with me in paradise."

Prayer is the unfolding of our hearts to God, and an open ear to His wise and compassionate response. Prayer is a gift of love we give to God, to ourselves, and to those in need for whom we pray

—Passionist Father James Thoman,
Spiritual Director

Visit www.passionistmonastery.org for a wide selection of Passionist Spiritual Enrollment folders and all occasion cards which offer the gift of prayer throughout the year to loved ones.



finding grace

Job is a sign of God for forklift operator

BY CHRISTIE L. CHICOINE
Catholic News Service

There's isn't a day when 37-year-old Omar Mendez, a forklift operator for Kraft Foods in Philadelphia, doesn't say, "God, thank you for this job—I'm happy."

"I'm always thanking God for this well-paying job and benefits to provide for my family," said Mendez, a husband and father of two who belongs to Visitation B.V.M. Parish in the Kensington section of Philadelphia.

Mendez is also grateful to Candice Koveleskie, the job development coordinator at the Cardinal Bevilacqua Community Center, who helped him acquire his forklift job five months ago.

"I told Candice, 'You're not just somebody who helped me find a job — you just made a friend,'" he added in an interview with *The Catholic Standard & Times*, newspaper of the Philadelphia Archdiocese.

Although he already had a forklift job at another company, Mendez approached the Cardinal Bevilacqua Community Center six months ago, seeking a bet-

ter way to provide better for his family, he said.

When Koveleskie showed him the job description at Kraft, Mendez recalled thinking, "Wow. This is an awesome opportunity. I told her, 'If you can get help me get this job, dinner's on me.'"

Koveleskie helped Mendez with his resume. "The next thing you know, I received a phone call from the manager," he said. A series of interviews followed, and eventually "they congratulated me and offered me the job." The process took less than three weeks.

The center—named for Cardinal Anthony J. Bevilacqua, the retired archbishop of Philadelphia—operates under the auspices of the archdiocesan Catholic Social Services, and receives funding from the annual Catholic Charities Appeal.

The center's job development and adult education programs seek to provide underemployed and unemployed individuals in north Philadelphia with the skills and educational tools necessary to achieve their employment goals.



Omar Mendez, a forklift operator for Kraft Foods, works in a Philadelphia warehouse. CNS

To accommodate its diverse, multilingual clients, the center offers many classes in both English and Spanish. It also offers computer classes, courses in English as a Second Language, known as ESL, and preparation for high school equivalency diploma exams.

In addition, the center provides recreational programs to young people and families in the

neighborhood.

Mendez's wife, Olga, is also receiving job-search assistance at the center. The two Mendez children—Omar Jr., 10, and Odalis, 5, both students at Visitation B.V.M. School—join in the fun at the center's gymnasium.

The Mendez family attended the grand opening of the center in 2003.

"We heard all the good things

that could happen" through the center, Mendez said. "We like hearing positive things that can happen in the community, and we try to volunteer as much as possible."

As he provides for his family, Mendez counts on his Catholic faith and his prayer life, he said.

He believes that getting hired at his present job "had a lot to do with faith—always striving, and never giving up."

Mendez also realizes that his skills are God-given: "I thank God for giving me the knowledge to understand how" to operate a forklift.

At his previous job, he trained others to operate the machine—an experience in which he could watch his protégés put his instructions into practice and thus provide a safer work environment.

Now, as he learns to operate a different type of forklift at his current job, he said of his new employers, "They bless me, because they're teaching me. 'Hopefully, in the near future,'" he added, "I will become a trainer."



DOMINICAN SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

Colloquium looks at the nature of parishes

The parish affords the sole experience of the church for the vast majority of the laity.

Catholics come to the parish, not to the diocese, to celebrate the sacraments, to be catechized and formed, and to receive pastoral care; it is the place in which the church encounters the world, and the world encounters the Church. Yet despite its critical role, many concerns are unresolved.

As the principal focus of the church's life, the parish is the setting in which tensions and divisions are encountered, between so-called "conservative" and "liberal" factions, around such issues as authority in the church, the role of the laity in the church's life, the relation of the parish to the diocese. In many dioceses parish life is presently imperiled by the financial burden of the recent scandals. Moreover, there appears to be little unified vision of the nature and role of the parish, as well as the bishop's pastoral office as it is exercised in the parish.

An interdisciplinary colloquium July 17-20 at Loyola University Chicago will bring experts and authorities from the fields of constitutional, corporate and canon law, as well as in ecclesiology and the theology of the laity, to begin a dia-

logue on the nature and mission of the parish.

The event, sponsored by the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, includes a

'An interdisciplinary colloquium July 17-20 at Loyola University Chicago ... to begin a dialogue on the nature and mission of the parish.'

keynote address by Cardinal George and presentations by Mark Chopko, general counsel for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Dominican Father Michael Sweeney, president of the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, Berkely, Cal.; Mark Sargent, dean of the University of Villanova Law School; and others.

Our hope is that every attendee will actively participate in the discussions.

For more information, visit our website: www.DSPT.edu

OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHURCH

Shrine honors Mary, full of grace

Grace is the action by which God forgives, sanctifies or strengthens his people. A local parish has a special relationship with a woman whose very name means grace—Saint Anne, mother of Mary and grandmother of Jesus.

This friendship goes back to 1900, when the pastor of St. Joseph Church (now Our Lady of Fatima) established the first shrine in Chicago.

The parish had been founded for French Canadians—among them, cousins of Blessed André Bessette. Unable to travel back to Quebec, these families now had their patroness in their midst. Due to strong faith and fervent prayers, "unusual favors" were granted at the

shrine making it quite famous. For this reason, a larger relic of Saint Anne, the largest in the United States, was presented to the parish by the Bishop of Apt, France.

Saints are both holy and human people who

led extraordinary lives. Since Mary—full of grace—was chosen to be the Mother of God, certainly Anne and Joachim, her parents,

'Grace is the action by which God forgives, sanctifies or strengthens his people.'

were extraordinary.

Today, Saint Anne continues to be a stronghold for the faithful who seek her intercession. For more information about the Saint Anne novena, call Our Lady of Fatima Church at (773) 927-2421.

PRO-LIFE ACTION LEAGUE

Finding a friend in pro-life work

Twenty years ago I was sued by the National Organization for Women because my pro-life activity at abortion clinics and on the street was causing abortion providers to lose business. It was an honor to be considered effective at saving lives. But the honor came with years of depositions, false accusations, a grueling trial, a nationwide injunction and a half-million-dollar judgment.

The lawsuit taught me to rely on God's help. One sign of his guiding hand was my introduction to the legal genius and generous spirit of Tom Brejcha, who led the NOW v. Scheidler RICO case to victory all the way up

in the United States Supreme Court—twice! As chief counsel of the Thomas More Society, Pro-Life Law Center, Tom defends the little guy—the pro-life sidewalk counselor arrested or sued for praying in front of an abortion clinic, the activist who is denied his First Amendment right to tell the truth about abortion. Tom Brejcha and the Thomas More Society are an answer to a pro-lifer's prayer for justice in a culture that rejects life and truth.

—Joseph M. Scheidler
National Director



From Page 3a

A PIECE OF HOME IN A POCKET

The letter that arrived in our rural Oregon mailbox was from Uncle Sam, ordering me into the U.S. Army. My two older brothers were already fighting in World War II. Now it was my turn. I had 30 days to report. Once I left, my father would be left to run our 175-acre Oregon farm, with only my youngest brother and four sisters to help.

I knew this concerned my father, though he never spoke of it. I knew just how much he missed his sons. A week before I was to leave for the base—I remember the evening well—my mother asked me to sit with her while the family prayed. She reached into her sewing basket and pulled out a tiny leather folder.

Inside was a small religious symbol she had lovingly crocheted. She asked me to carry it while serving my country.

I reported for duty, was trained in the art of warfare and shipped out to the hellhole called Okinawa. This island in the Pacific became scene of some of the fiercest fighting in the war, against an entrenched and stubborn enemy. As the battle surged around us, the sergeant ordered us to attack.

Just eight days after my 21st birthday, I was shot twice. The first bullet sent me hobbling toward safety. As I did, the second tore into my chest, passed near my heart and burst out through my shoulder. The enemy left me for dead.

But I was found by medics and survived. They kept me alive, patched up my wounds, and sent me home. Though I was grievously wounded, my parents were certain my return was due to their prayers—and that small crocheted symbol of their faith.

My recuperation took quite a while. But I was anxious to begin helping with the chores, feel the fresh morning air in my lungs, and be a farmer once again.

Three years later, after a long day in the field, I realized my wallet was missing. It would have been impossible to re-

trace my many steps that day, so I went replaced my ID cards, drivers license, and the rest of those important documents.

The following summer, one of my sisters stumbled on my wallet in the brush while picking blackberries. Only one thing survived a year exposed to the elements: the piece of crocheted yarn my mother made.

Some time later I was baling hay when the machine clanked to a stop for no apparent reason. I was puzzled and hoped a repair wasn't necessary, since the delay would dry out the hay and lose income for the farm.

As I peered inside the baler, I discovered my wallet, which had fallen from my pocket. The next slash of the blades would have turned it to mulch. As it was, one corner had been sliced off, though the emblem inside was untouched.

Time and again through the years, this sort of thing has been repeated.

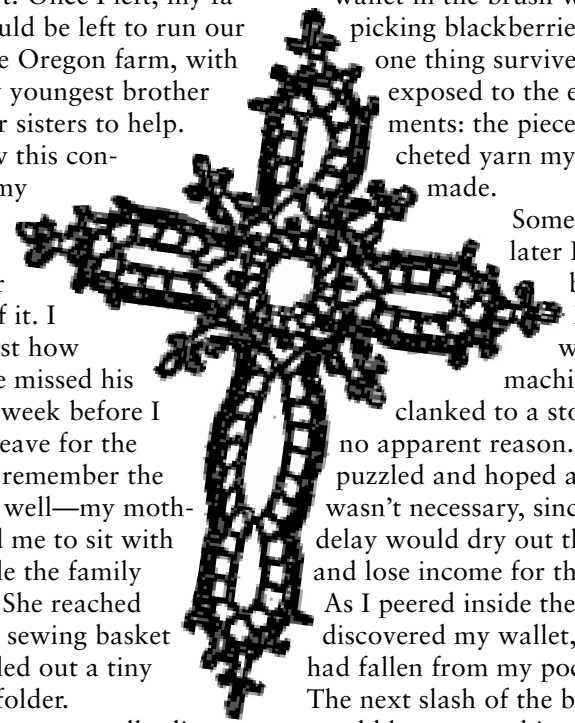
Once I returned from sitting all day at an auction to find my wallet gone. The following week, again at the auction, a man called me by name and handed me my missing wallet. The missing \$200 could be replaced, but the bit of crocheting was safe. I hoped the man's conscience was as clear as mine.

Each autumn, after the crops are harvested, the fields are burned off to eliminate insects and disease and prepare the soil for the following spring. One fall as I was walking the fields after the annual burn, I found my wallet lying in a patch of green grass, untouched by the fire that had scorched all around it.

Miraculous acts of God? I think so.

When I was discharged from the army a half century ago, I had five medals on my chest and a patch on my sleeve. Today they lay in a box in some drawer. The small religious symbol with a red-and-pink border my mother crocheted for me so long ago remains my wallet.

—Raymond, Portland, Or.





From Page 11a

public service

Patrick Flaherty, Battalion Chief,
Chicago Fire Department

For me, God's grace comes through the example of other people's lives, their beliefs and moral values. In tough situations you find his grace in the goodness of people.

'God's grace comes through the example of other people's lives.'

Sgt. Michael Martin,
Chicago Police Department

I find God's grace through interaction with kids—my own or in coaching other kids. Watching them learn. Their exuberance. How they can surprise you.

lay leaders

Sister Helen Rita Lane
Daughter of St. Paul

I find grace in helping people who call us on the phone or come into our book center. Often you can see God's grace working through them. Also in prayer, communion with God, and in living out my calling day to day.

Dr. Jack Claxton

president of the Chicago Association
of Holy Name Societies

I find God's grace in elderly people who have a deep faith in God, especially the sick. They have a lot of wisdom and they see things we don't. Their vision is different.

Linda Weaver, member of
the evangelization committee.

I take communion to the sick and shut in—from young people stricken by disabling disease to the elderly moments away from death. I find grace (and comfort) in the look of peace in their eyes as they suffer in God's embrace, confident that he is with them. Their positive attitudes put my minor challenges in perspective.



everyday people

Dave Beatrice, regularly attends
Holy Name Cathedral



I find God's grace in church, prayer, the Eucharist and the rosary. I feel God's presence in the Eucharist. Christ is alive in the Eucharist, and Christ comes into me. I feel that God's grace is a matter of faith.

Winifred Conqueror, 92,
parishioner of St. Nicholas, Evanston

I find God's grace in doing for others, when I am in times of troubles and in the Eucharist. I am a Eucharistic minister and I feel his presence in the Eucharist.

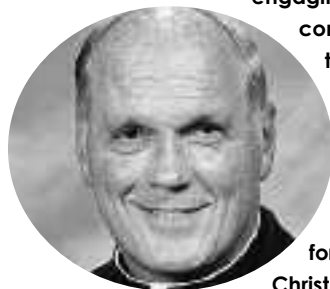
bishops

Bishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, M.Sp.S. I find God's grace as a bishop in the celebration of the Eucharist, Confirmations, praying before the Blessed Sacrament and relating lovingly with the people that the Lord has entrusted to me, especially the young and the poor. The friendships that I have started with other bishops and priests bring a sense of belonging, stability and creativity. The relationship with Mary, the Mother of Jesus gives me the direction of discipleship.



Bishop George Rassas

As a new bishop I have found great satisfaction in engaging those about to be confirmed with the idea that they are important to the future of the church. They will need to "dare to be different" and never be afraid to stand up for our faith in Jesus Christ, for the power and grace of the Holy Spirit is with us always.



Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki

I find God's Grace primarily in my preaching and in the people I meet. When I preach, I wonder about the Source of the words that come out of my mouth. Also, I wonder why someone has crossed my path, and shortly thereafter a reason emerges. I can only conclude that it is grace of the Holy Spirit at work.



health care

Connie Rakitan, chair of the archdiocesan
Commission on Mental Illness

I find God's grace in what I call the mish-mash. In Faith and Fellowship Ministries (which works with families and individuals touched by mental illness) we have such an array of people from different ages, cultures and backgrounds. I see God's grace when a motley crew of people come together and share friendship and love.

Amy Florian, executive director, Stauros U.S.A. I work with people who are ill, grieving, or suffering, yet I am not tempted to despair. Instead, my hope is renewed and strengthened, because I see God's grace and healing power always at work. There is no greater privilege than seeing light glimmer through darkness, peaceful joy emerging from brokenness, and divine love embracing a weary heart.

Marie Coglianese,
director of pastoral care and education at Loyola
Medical Center in Maywood and a hospital chaplain
for 25 years

I find God's grace in the stories of people. When I meet people who are experiencing illness they tell stories of where they find God. Through their personal stories of pain, struggle, healing and hope, I find grace.

ONE WORLD ONE MISSION ONE PERSON



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MARYKNOLL
One World, One Mission

Greg Darr
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Lastly, pilgrims come and venerate the relics of St. Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Conventual Franciscan priest, publisher, theologian and evangelist. His life of charity and heroic death in the Auschwitz death camp is commemorated in our Kolbe/Holocaust Exhibit. St. Maximilian is considered the patron of journalists, families, prisoners, those afflicted with chemical dependency, and the pro-life movement.

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The other daily and nightly imperative of our life is the heartache of our whole torn and frag-

mented world and of the many individuals who bring us their sorrow and striving as well as their hopes and joys. All are held to the heart of our prayer, both in our hours of adoration in the chapel and during our other occupations.

Our founding abbess, Mother Mary Francis, wrote about the singing joy of those who leave all things to find an enduring “Right to

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‘We rise in the middle of the night because his greatness and goodness are too tremendous a reality to go unpraised throughout the night.’

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ST. MARIA GORETTI PARISH, DYER, IND.

“DaVinci Code” offers “fast food”

Clearly, the enduring popularity of “The Da Vinci Code” by Dan Brown indicates that we live among people, lots of people, who hunger for religious mystery. The fictional intrigue of the book and movie provides “fast food” for the soul but not a real feast of wonder and awe that breathes of the Mystery that “eye has not seen nor ear heard”. There is no call to transformation of sight and sound.

Would that we could realize that Jesus did not preach an “organizational model” but gave voice to what he saw and heard from God the Father Creator: the sick healed, the blind seeing, the lame dancing.

The “organizational model” that dominates Catholic experience in this country can not hold, the center gives way, and the faith, of the young especially, erodes like castles in the sand washed away in the waves. All the “fixing”

about translation and posture and policy and uniformity is vainglory. What if we looked at Jesus not as the organiz-

‘The “organizational model” that dominates Catholic experience ... can not hold, the center gives way, and the faith, of the young especially, erodes like castles in the sand.’

er of a church but as the Wonder Worker, Prince of Peace, Beloved Child of God? What if we started at a different place?

What Mystery would emerge and what might we do next?

—Father Charles Niblick, Pastor of St. Maria Goretti Parish,

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Sign from God? Money meets prayer in priest's life

BY ANDY TELLI
Catholic News Service

Following an old family tradition, on Salvatorian Father Fred Schmit's first birthday his grandparents, looking for a sign of what the future might hold, placed several items representing various careers on one side of the room and their infant grandson on the other.

He crawled across the room, and the first thing he picked up was a prayer book, said Father Schmit.

Just to make sure, they tried the process again. "The second time I picked up a dollar bill," he said.

Schmit's destiny was set. Many of his 60 years as a priest have been spent in charge of fundraising for his order. Thus in his work the money met the prayer book.

Although he was in administration for his order for much of his career, Schmit's most rewarding assignment has been as a parish priest, he told the Tennessee Register, newspaper of the Nashville Diocese.

"You see tangibly the evidence of what you've done," he said of his work in parishes, the last eight years at St. Andrew Parish in Sparta. "You've brought them back, not only to church, but to an understanding of what their life's purpose is."

Family, friends and parishioners at St. Andrew gathered at the church June 10 to help Schmit mark the 60th anniversary of his ordination as a priest.

Ordained June 11, 1946, at what is now the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, Schmit said he "was destined to be a teacher and had prepared myself for a teaching career." Instead, the Salvatorians named him assistant director of the order's publishing department, which was its fundraising arm.

By 1953, he was named executive director of the publishing department. "We had the very first, full-scale computer network dedicated solely to fundraising," Schmit said. "I guess it was the start of com-

puterized fundraising."

He later helped found the Catholic Fund Raisers Association, now known as the National Catholic Development Conference. "I had the privilege of chairing the first meeting," he said.

In 1965, Schmit moved to Rome to serve as treasurer general for the Salvatorians. "When I left for Rome we had eight seminaries with 1,000 students," he said. His job was to raise several million dollars a year to help pay for the operation of the seminaries.

In the early 1990s, nearing retirement, he returned to the United States and worked in parishes in Wisconsin and Virginia.

In 1997, his order asked him to go to St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Cookeville to help out for five months. By the time



Father Fred Schmit celebrates Mass at St. Andrew Church in Sparta, Tenn., marking the 60th anniversary of his ordination as a priest.

CNS

he was scheduled to return to Wisconsin and retirement, Schmit said, "I had fallen in love with Tennessee and I

wanted to stay here."

When he first came to St. Andrew, it had 40 families and was served by the Salvatorian priests assigned to Cookeville, Schmit said. Today there are 125 families and room to grow, with a new church that seats 300 people.

Schmit deflected credit for the parish's growth. "I don't do it; it's the Holy Spirit who does it," he said. "I'm just here as the means to furnish people with the opportunity."

Schmit, who turns 86 July 7, has no plans to retire.

At his age, "there's no point in retiring," he said. "I could never have the satisfying life in retirement that I have here. I would just wither if I retired."

He is looking forward to continuing his service to the people of St. Andrew, as long as he can find time for his favorite pastime, golf.

"My ambition is to shoot my age," Schmit said. "I have two options, either improve my game or live to be 100."

The Real Presence Association

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KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Knights of Columbus bring relics

The 1920s brought a revolution to Mexico, along with the widespread persecution of Catholics. Missionaries were expelled from the country, Catholic seminaries and schools were closed, and the Church was forbidden to own property. Priests and laymen were told to denounce their faith in public; if they refused, they faced not just punishment but torture and death.

During this time of oppression, the Knights of Columbus did not retreat in Mexico but grew dramatically, from 400 members in 1918 to 6,000 members just five years later. In the United States at the time, the Knights handed out five million pamphlets that described the brutality of the Mexican government toward Catholics. As a

result, the Mexican government greatly feared and eventually outlawed the Knights.

Thousands of men, many of whom were Knights, would not bow to these threats or renounce their faith, and they often paid with their lives. They took a stand when that was the most difficult thing they could do, and their courage and devotion have echoed down

'Relics of six [Knights], who were martyred by the Mexican Government, will be in the Chicago area from July 21-24.'

through the decades.

Relics of six of these men, who were martyred by the Mexican Government, will be in the Chicago area from July 21-24.

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“This book speaks of homeless women not as an issue or a project but as people whose life experiences can be for all of us a revelation and an invitation to respond personally to another unique, rich human life.”

Edward J. Murray
Faith and Values Media
New York

“These stories are poignant, profound, penetrating—and, like the word of God, they cut through to bone and marrow exposing our prejudice and our sin. But like the women in these pages we, too, are challenged to hope. We hope that, because of their stories, decency and justice might live in us again and teach us anew about Eucharist, about compassion, about loving, in short, about God.”

Barbara E. Boue
Catholic Theological Union
Chicago

For more information about Liguori Publications and our diverse product line, visit our website at www.liguori.org.

ST ANNE'S CHURCH

Historic novena at St. Anne, Illinois

For 126 years, this small village church in northeastern Illinois has been the destination for hundreds of devoted pilgrims who make the novena to St. Anne and celebrate St. Anne's Day, July 26.

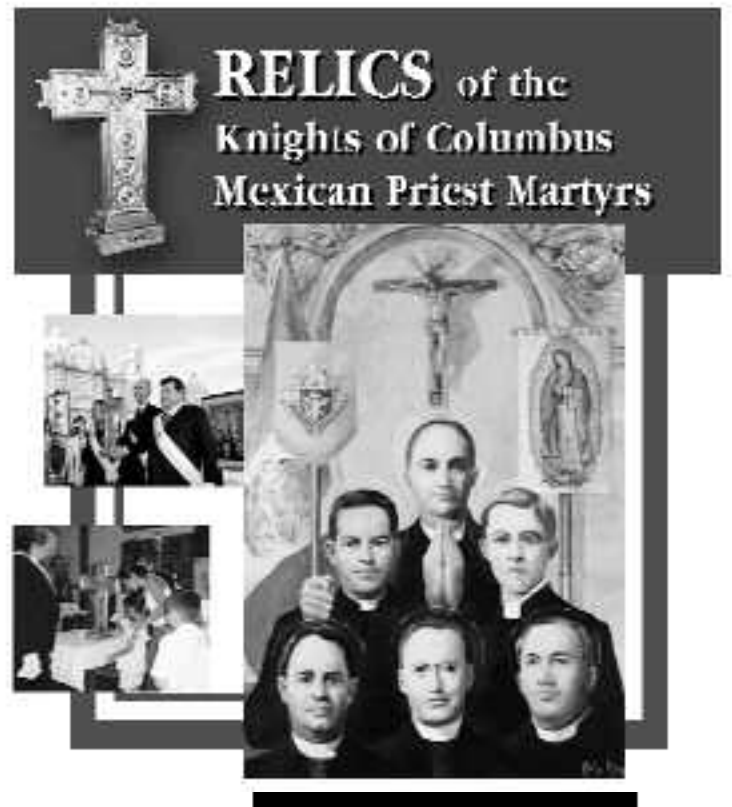
In earlier years, area devotees arrived on horseback and in wagons. Trains from Chicago carried gentlemen and ladies whose long skirts swept the dirt streets of the village as they sought lodging in the homes of the many locals who rented spare rooms for the nine days of prayer which make up a novena (from the Latin “novem,” i.e., nine). The popularity of the shrine has been enhanced by reports of cures and favors received through the intercession of St. Anne, honored as the mother of Mary and the grandmother of Jesus.

One event especially, the cure of Matilda Ann Cunnea, a twenty-two year old Chicago woman, on July 26, 1904, contributed to the fame of the Shrine. Cunnea's grateful family do-

nated beautiful stained glass windows bearing the likenesses of St. Anne and St. Patrick to this church, which was founded and built by a French-Canadian congregation. Matilda Cunnea's wheelchair, as well as canes and crutches left behind as testimonials by other pilgrims, are displayed in the church. Today's pilgrims come to the Shrine of St. Anne in cars and chartered buses. Large numbers gather on St. Anne's Day, July 26, the 9th day of the novena, when the beautiful old limestone church, the open-air pavilion, the parish hall, the lawns and gardens are entirely given over to the festival.

St. Anne Church and Shrine are located at 230 N. 6th Ave. in St. Anne, Ill. To reach St. Anne from the Chicago area, take I-57 south to Kankakee/Momence exit, then take Highway 17 east seven miles to Highway 1. Take Highway 1 south seven miles to the village of St. Anne.

For more information call (815) 427-8265.



CHICAGO, July 21-23, 2006

**July 21 - 7PM Mass - Immaculate Conception Parish
2944 E 89th St., Chicago**

Followed by a procession to Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish
5200 E 91st St., Chicago

**July 22 - 5PM Mass - St. Charles Borromeo Parish
1637 N 37th Ave., Melrose Park**

Followed by a prayer service and veneration.

**July 23 - 8AM Mass - Holy Name Cathedral
735 N State St., Chicago**

Followed later by an afternoon prayer service and veneration.

For more information visit www.kofc.org/relics

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finding grace

ST THERÈSE OF LISIEUX

“Little Way” of St. Thérèse of Lisieux

Thérèse saw herself as a child of God, with simplicity, focus and wonder. Trust is a childlike virtue. Some spiritualities have stressed complicated practices and extraordinary soul journeys in response to God’s love. Thérèse’s spirituality is simple—her “little way.” She believed and teaches us that life presents enough challenges and opportunities for grace. She teaches us that God is everywhere—in every situation and person—and in the ordinary, simple details of life. Spirituality is about embracing what life gives us as gift.

“Everything is grace” is her theme song. Her “little way” is about doing the ordinary things of life with extraordinary love: a smile, a note of encouragement, suffering in silence, a simple unnoticed task to brighten the life of another, done with love. The smallest action of love is more important than great deeds done for personal glory, gratification, or simply out of obedience or fear. She knew she was part of someone bigger and God works best in our imperfection.

In prayer, Thérèse emphasizes simplicity. She did not like long and formal prayers. She prayed affectively from her heart, communing in a childlike relationship of love, trust and bold confidence with “Abba” (“Dad”). The power and simplicity of her message is why our church declared her a Doctor of the Church in 1997.

RELIGIOUS END

Store offers inspiration

Religious End, a dream for more than five years for co-owner Debra Rock, opened its doors in March 2005. Since that time Religious End has been serving the south suburban Chicago area and beyond with a wide range of religious and inspirational items.

Visitors/customers have been known to spend over an hour in the store admiring all it has to offer. Those that come in just for one or two items often say “You offer too many beautiful choices. It is hard to decide.”

In addition to the basic religious items, a wide variety of Bibles, prayer cards, rosaries and statues both indoor and outdoor, Religious End offers a wall of crucifixes and crosses, church candles, patens, pyx, cruets and bulletin covers. We also carry baptismal outfits and gifts and a wide range of medals, rosary bracelets and a line of inspirational items from Lenox and crystal to Infant of Prague statues and garments. Clergy, teacher and bulk order/purchase discounts are among the special offers available at Religious End.

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‘You offer too many beautiful choices. It is hard to decide.’

REAL PRESENCE

Real Presence sponsors exhibit

The Real Presence Association is dedicated to promoting the Eucharist, through education about Jesus’ real presence in the Eucharist and through promotion of Eucharistic adoration. Housed in Chicago, the Real Presence Association works around the world to magnify the presence of Christ in our midst.

In September, an international exhibit about eucharistic miracles will begin a tour of the United States, with stops being planned in Chicago (specifics not yet known). Over 80 of the most awe-inspiring miracles in Christian history are being presented in the exhibit, which began in Rome and has traveled internationally for the past year. The display includes in-depth historical descriptions of the miracles.

The Real Presence Association uses the internet to help others discover the inner peace that comes from eucharistic adoration. At www.therealpresence.org, the reader can find an updated list of nearly 7,000 chapels across the United States that offer eucharistic adoration.

The Web site also has a downloadable training manual for those interested in starting an adoration program in their parishes. In addition, the website features information about the Eucharist in the world, historically and today.

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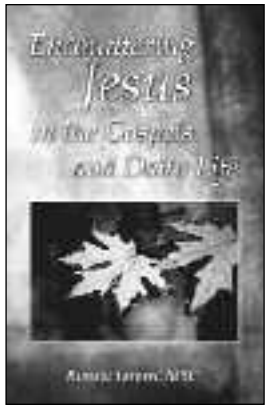
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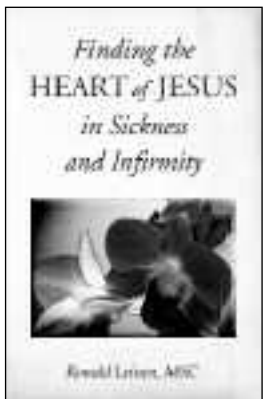


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Fr. Ronald Leinen is a priest-member of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Now semi-retired, he is a former chaplain and teacher in addition to being a priest and pastoral counselor.

Read his inspirational editorial on page 6A



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Priest enjoys God's wonders, one park at a time

BY TERRY MCGUIRE
Catholic News Service

He's visited all 50 state capitols as well as the historical sites of all the past U.S. presidents.

So where will Father James P. Coyne point his 2000 Honda Civic this summer when he rolls out of town July 2 following the Sunday Masses at St. John the Baptist Church in Covington, where he is pastor? South to California, east to Utah, south down into Texas, east again to Florida then north to New York.

The hard-driving pastor expects to log another 13,000 miles—continuing on his latest mission to visit every national park, historical monument and other units in the National Park System in a mission he calls "the Quest."

"When I say, 'the Quest,' people laugh; they know what I'm talking about," he told The Catholic Northwest Progress, newspaper of the Seattle Archdiocese.

So far he's been to 288 of

the National Park System's approximately 390 units, as the park system calls them. That number grows each year with the addition of new units. On this trip he expects to rack up approximately 60 more.

The visits bring him closer to God, he said. And it's not just the natural wonders. Two Native American sites in particular—Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument in New Mexico and Bear Paw Battlefield in Montana—left him with a "real appreciation of God's presence and love and care for me," he said.

He said he remembers being at Bear Paw, where Nez Perce Chief Joseph surrendered to the U.S. Cavalry, by himself about 6 or 6:30 in the morning, "and I felt just very drawn to prayer," the priest said. "A real peacefulness and a feeling of solitude came over me."

"The Quest" is the most recent goal for a man who loves both driving and American history. He's been combining the two since the early 1980s,

when a visit to Thomas Jefferson's home in Virginia, Monticello, along with a biography the priest had been reading on Lyndon B. Johnson, sparked his interest in things presidential.

This summer's trip will give him a chance to chalk up two new sites: Ronald Reagan's grave in California and the Clinton Library in Arkansas.

He's especially looking forward this trip to visiting Rainbow Bridge National Monument in Utah. It will involve a seven-and-a-half-hour round-trip boat ride to see the world's largest natural bridge.

"The Quest" was launched five years ago when Father Coyne came across a map of all the National Park System units. "I thought, 'Well, I've gone to a lot of these (national parks) already. Why don't I just go for the rest?'"

Though he has traveled to some of them by air (Hawaii) and sea (Alaska Ferry), the bulk of his journeys have been behind the wheel. He figures he's logged 50,000 to 60,000 highway miles.

ST. MARIA GORETTI

Religious Education/Faith Formation is happy to invite you to an evening with

FATHER RICHARD ROHR, O.F.M.

"Religion As Transformation"

Sunday August 6, 2006

7:00p.m.-9:00 p.m.

St. Maria Goretti Religious Education/Faith Formation is happy to invite you to hear Father Richard Rohr on August 6, from 7-9 p.m. Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM, will use this one night talk, since it is the Feast of the Transfiguration of Jesus, to describe what we mean by religious "transformation." Religion has largely served as a "belonging system" in most of history, with many unfortunate results. Jesus was clearly talking about a transformational system: a different mind, a different heart, a different kind of human person that could change the world. Fr. Richard will try to explain the difference and the very different results. There will be time for dialogue afterwards.

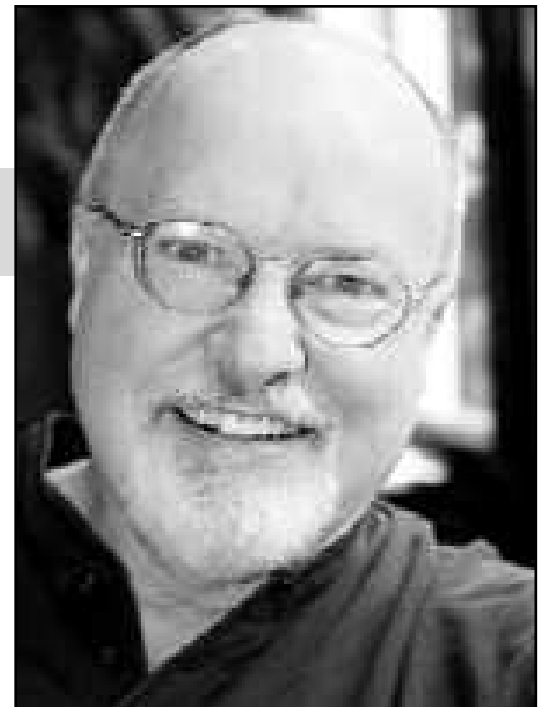
There is no charge but reservations are required and attendance can be confirmed by calling St. Maria Goretti Parish. The evening will begin with a buffet supper, served at 5:30 p.m, for each confirmed reservation.

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Richard Rohr, OFM, Popular speaker, writer and retreat master is a Franciscan of the New Mexico Province.

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finding grace

and sea (Alaska Ferry), the bulk of his journeys have been behind the wheel. He figures he's logged 50,000 to 60,000 highway miles.

He doesn't linger during his visits—although “fascinating” sights such as Utah's Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks have compelled him to stay longer, he said. Depending on what there is to see, he's often in and out of the place the same day. In the larger parks, he'll take the loop drive, stop at the interpretive signs, and walk the paths if they're not more than a mile or so.

“I'm long on breadth, short on depth,” he said of his visits, “with the idea that I'd like to get back to many of them (someday) and spend more time there.”

He's been saving up his vacation time for this summer's trip, a long one of almost six weeks. And this time he has vowed not to rush himself so much.

Still, when a visitor recently asked him if there was anything worthwhile to see in what some might consider a less touristy state—such as Kansas—he

began rattling off several of the Sunflower State's historical civil rights sites as if he were reading from an encyclopedia.

The trips are “fun and relaxing, and I come away with a greater appreciation of our country and its history,” Father Coyne said. “A lot of the history is good and positive, and yet there are some areas there—especially in settling the West regarding what we've done to the Native Americans—that have made me more conscious of injustice as well.”