



BROTHERHOOD of HOPE®

PRIMUM DEUS • DEUS SOLUM

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2013



Called by the Pope

Brotherhood Confrere Now Serving in the Vatican Curia

BY FR. PHILIP MERDINGER, BH

A profound and unexpected joy came upon our Brotherhood around the turn of the year. A singular honor and responsibility was conferred on Fr. Bob Oliver with the appointment by Pope Benedict XVI to the position of Promoter of Justice at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in Rome. Six weeks after the announcement, Fr. Bob promptly moved to Rome to begin his new responsibilities.

The Holy Father was himself the Prefect of this Congregation for many years before his election as Pope in 2005. His predecessor, Pope John Paul II, once explained that the mission of the CDF is “to promote and safeguard the doctrine of faith and morals throughout the Catholic world. For this reason everything which in any way touches such matters falls within its competence.”

Fr. Oliver was appointed as one of the ‘superiors’ of the CDF charged with directing its work. The Promoter of Justice is responsible for investigating serious offenses against Church law, including sacramental crimes and allegations of clerical sexual abuse of minors. Cardinal Seán O’Malley of Boston had this to say about the appointment: “Fr. Oliver is a distinguished canon lawyer who brings the requisite experience and an understanding of the importance of this office within the life of the Church.”

It would take more space than this article provides to even briefly cite Fr. Bob’s credentials, experience and accomplishments since he was ordained in 2000 along with Fr. Paul Helfrich. Having earned two doctoral degrees, one in ecclesiology and the other in canon law, Fr. Bob has been a professor of systematic theology and canon law at St. John’s Seminary in Boston and at Catholic University in Washington. He has served as a judge in many canonical cases (his father and grandfather both were judges in various civilian courts). Moreover, he has developed policy and given expert counsel – especially in matters relating to the sexual abuse crisis – both in Boston and nationally. Among his many other interests is his involvement with new lay communities and its fruitful integration into the Church’s life and mission. His extensive experience and counsel have guided the growth and development of

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CARDINAL SEÁN O’MALLEY

our Brotherhood, as well.

All of these activities and accomplishments have taken place in the context of Fr. Bob’s life in the Brotherhood. Although his particular gifts and responsibilities on behalf of the Church have required long periods of study and service apart from the daily rhythms of our community life, his utter dedication to the Brotherhood’s welfare has been a pillar of strength and joy to

CONTINUED ON BACK

FR. OLIVER LOOKS TO ROME. Reflecting on the work ahead, Fr. Bob said, “Receiving this assignment during the Year of Faith is inspirational and challenging. I humbly ask for the Holy Spirit’s guidance and grace.”



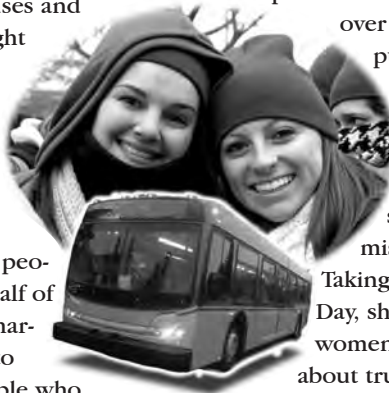
A R O U N D T H E B R O T H E R H O O D



BUSSING LOTS OF LIFE

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade and the yearly March for Life gathering at our nation's capital. Despite media reports to the contrary, the March has become a great rally for young people. It is probably the largest human rights demonstration in the world.

Two of our campus missions (FSU and RU) have packed out buses and traveled through the night to attend. We estimate that over 1200 college students from our missions have attended the March for Life over the last decade or so. It's a concrete way for young people to speak out on behalf of the unborn. It's also a marvelous encouragement to see so many young people who share common convictions.



NEW BH GOVERNMENT

As you can see in this current newsletter, important decisions were made at our recent Assembly, which occurs every four years. In addition to electing Br. Ken Apuzzo as our next General Superior, we also elected a new Council: Fr. Paul Helfrich, Br. Sam Gunn, and Br. Clinton Reed. Beginning on Pentecost they will work as a team to provide governmental care for the community.

OF LOVE AND GARBAGE TRUCKS

Here are two innovative ways that students from our Rutgers outreach reached out to others unexpectedly with God's love.

After mega-storm Sandy's devastation, the brothers and 15 college men went door-to-door in Tom's River offering assistance to families impacted by the storm. They mainly hauled damaged goods to the curb. One brother even got his childhood dreams by hitching a ride on a garbage truck and helping them for the day! People were extremely grateful to see

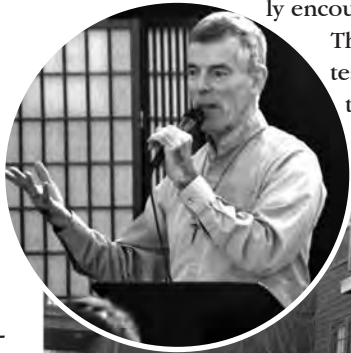
hope arrive literally at their doorstep. As a result: more trips were launched to serve more NJ families.

On Valentine's Day many unchurched women at Rutgers read about God's love for them through post-it messages all over campus. The notes had Scripture passages or statements like "you're loved" during the 'RU Beautiful' campaign spearheaded by our inter-missionary Ericka Lemire. Taking advantage of Valentine's Day, she and other outreach women also did random surveys about true love. Ericka said that "the goal is to show you are loved and valued by God." These efforts got nice coverage in the university newspaper along with an award. Also, over a dozen new women came to our outreach's meeting that week!

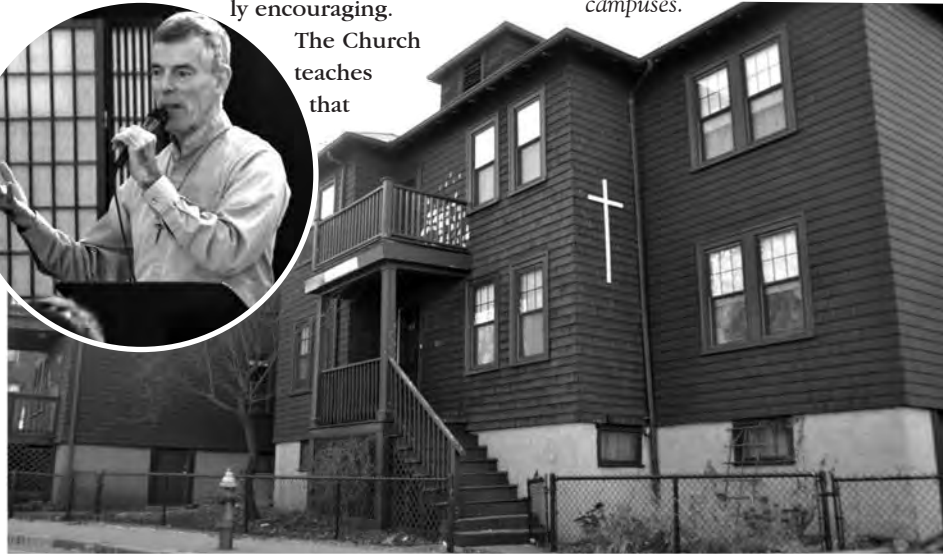


ECUMENICAL EFFORTS

Br. Joe Donovan taught about Christian unity during an Inter-Varsity (inter-denominational) gathering at Boston College recently (inset). The response was mutually encouraging.



The Church teaches that



"relations between Christians are not aimed merely at mutual knowledge, common prayer and dialogue. They presuppose ... every possible form of practical cooperation at all levels: pastoral, cultural and social, as well as that of witnessing to the Gospel message." Thus, part of our college mission includes building such bridges with other Christians.

MISSION ON THE HILL

The Lord has fulfilled a long-term prayer intention for us to live closer to our HUB campus outreach in Boston. We are now leasing (with the option to buy) two former religious houses - one which hosted Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta! The area is dubbed "Mission Hill," home to the historic Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, a site of various missions, pilgrimages and miraculous healings over many decades. Today nearly 60,000 college students from a dozen city colleges live in the area. We're now surrounded by those whom God has called to evangelize: the spiritually poor.

MOVIN' ON UP! Our new rental homes on historic Mission Hill near several of the HUB campuses.

S H A R I N G O U R V I S I O N



Smokin' Results

BY BR. RAHL BUNSA, BH

You probably heard the headlines but not the details. So here's the scoop.

On January 1st the Brotherhood Assembly elected Brother Ken Apuzzo to be our next General Superior. The vote tally was very decisive. Moreover, it occurred on the first ballot! After his acceptance we entered the chapel to thank God and pray over our brother. Unlike papal elections, white smoke didn't flow from our chimney, but the news did spread quickly (... and smoke did eventually flow from pipes or cigars after our celebratory dinner!).

Br. Ken is legendary in Brotherhood lore. He was our first associate, novice, and evangelist. He later captained the first team we sent to Rutgers and Florida State. Countless alumni attest to the huge impact he's had on them personally as well as on the Newman Centers - which are now large, vibrant outreaches.

Of the 60 priestly or religious vocations we've fostered over the years, Br. Ken has influenced many of them. He also spearheaded our Tanzania mission, the Boston Urban Challenge, a chaplaincy to three Division I sports teams, and many other initiatives. In short, we



After his election as General Superior, **BR. KEN APUZZO** is prayed over by the community.

elected a man of God with vision, creativity, courage, and zeal for advancing God's kingdom.

The leadership transition occurs on Pentecost Sunday, at which point I will start a sabbatical with a 30-day Ignatian retreat. It's been a privilege to serve as General Superior for three terms, and I look forward to serving wherever and however my new 'boss' deems best!

Please join us in praying for Br. Ken and his new responsibilities. We also rely on the prayers of *another* Br. Ken Apuzzo: father, widower, grandfather, vowed brother, and our first member to die and meet the Lord. Together with him we rejoice in this election and in God's fatherly care for the Brotherhood. †



SOS: Our "New" Global Family

BH Joins the Sword of the Spirit - the Lay Movement of our Roots

After several years of communal discernment the Brotherhood of Hope decided to join the Sword of the Spirit (SOS), the lay movement that inspired our beginnings. We now have "family connections" in 77 communities from 27 countries around the globe.

The SOS is an international, charismatic, ecumenical alliance of lay covenant communities that evangelize. Said differently, it is a global network of intentional/ committed communities of Christians from various traditions

(Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox); it emerged from the charismatic renewal

(the fastest growing movement in Church history); and it seeks to evangelize and disciple others, especially young people. Our newsletters have regularly mentioned various SOS groups, especially ones that we've interacted with in recent years.

Most SOS members are married couples with children. Yet there are many singles who join the SOS after being evangelized at campus missions similar to ours, such as St. Paul's Outreach and University Christian Outreach. These alumni



EVERY NATION AND TRIBE... Leaders representing communities from all over the world at a Sword of the Spirit conference. (Photo courtesy of Nico Angeles)

CONTINUED ON BACK

**GLOBAL FAMILY**

CONTINUED FROM INSIDE

desire *long-term* community support, discipleship mentoring, and fruitful service.

There is an impressive ecumenical brotherhood in the SOS called the Servants of the Word. Since God used these men years ago to inspire Fr. Philip to establish the Brotherhood of Hope, we've always had the highest respect and gratitude for them. In recent years we've had more interaction with them – for visits, retreats, professions, etc. Our friendships, mutuality and brotherly bonds are rich indeed.

The Brotherhood's genesis also developed in the context of an SOS community in New Jersey, the People of Hope (POH). Several brothers still have family members in that community (BTW: Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, the preacher to the papal household, calls the POH his spiritual family too since he encountered the Spirit's transforming power through them). Our early brothers served in the life and outreaches of the POH, including our first mission at Rutgers University. When we later discerned our need to pursue canonical approval, this necessitated more autonomy from the lay community, even though we still maintained our many friendships.

Eventually, our canonical approval came from Boston during 1998. Several years later God began leading us to discern afresh our relationship with the SOS. By then our life had developed into a new expression of consecrated life in the

Catholic Church, yet one which preserved key elements of our SOS heritage. We found our new collaboration with the SOS mutually fruitful. We also were impressed with how flexible the SOS leaders were

with our unique situation.

We had two great advantages during our long discernment process: the presence of our wise founder and the advice of a renowned canonist (subsequently



THE BROTHERHOOD OF HOPE. (front row, left to right) Br. John McCabe, Br. Allen Marquez, Fr. Bob Oliver, Fr. Philip Merdinger, Br. Ted Psemeneke, Br. Joseph Donovan, Jose Lim (associate). (2nd row, left to right) Br. Rahl Bunsu, Br. Adam Neri, Br. Parker Jordan, Br. Stephen Quense, Br. Patrick Reilly, Joe Calvano (associate), Br. Sam Gunn, (3rd row, left to right) Br. Clinton Reed IV, Fr. Paul Helfrich, Br. Jude Lasota, Br. Ken Apuzzo, Br. Jason Zink, Logan Murray (associate). Not pictured: Br. Gary Davis and three more associates.

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US...

in our mission of bringing the transforming love of Jesus to others, especially the young. Know that we pray for you and your intentions in our daily community prayer. Please continue to remember us in your prayers and support.

BROTHERHOOD OF HOPE

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called to Rome)! Yet an equally key advantage was the outside training we had received on how to do communal discernment for such important matters. The result? Not only was there consensus to join the SOS, but the Assembly vote was a unanimous 'yes' – a clear sign of our conviction, peace and unity.

This decision won't change much of our daily living, but it certainly opens the door to connections, resources, wisdom, evangelization, and opportunities in the future. You'll probably hear more in future newsletters. In the meantime, we rejoice greatly in the Lord's divine providence and goodness to the Brotherhood. †

**CALLED BY POPE**

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

the brothers.

Fr. Bob has also been a mainstay of quiet confidence to many. To me, amid the challenges and pitfalls of founding a new community of Catholic religious brothers-in-information, he has been a most loyal counselor and a dear and dependable friend.

We salute you, Fr. Bob, and we commit ourselves to frequent intercession for you in your service in Rome as Promoter of Justice on behalf of the people of God. †

Also see our Facebook's 1/11/13 entry that links to a front-page story in the National Catholic Register.