



Priestly People

WE ALL ARE THE PRIESTLY PEOPLE OF GOD. TOGETHER, WE ARE LEADERS IN RESPONDING TO THE EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF PRIESTS AND BROTHERS.

January 2010 - Vol. 25 No. 7

Priestly People,

Some years ago I remember reading that the average age of priests in the USA was somewhere in the upper 60's. That is over the age of retirement for many persons.

However, when we look at the life and ministry of many priests in their 70's and 80's, starting with our 80+ year old Pope Benedict XVI, we can often see a vitality and productivity that is an amazing sign of God's grace and providence for our Church. But, of course, there are also infirm and suffering priests who carry out an important part of Christ's presence among us. Recognition also needs to be given to the increasing numbers of dedicated new and young priests throughout many parts of the world.

Last month, at the end of 2009, Fr. Gregory McCormick, s.P., celebrated his 60th anniversary of ordination and his 87th year of age. Fr. Gregory is Father Servant of the local sP community in Jemez Springs, where the Servants of the Paraclete began in 1947. He is also pastor of the local parish, Our Lady of the Assumption, a small but growing and energetic parish.

We thought it would be fitting for Fr. Gregory to write an article, in the current series on the Priesthood, about his 60 years as a priest. His words on his 60th anniversary are pure Gregorian. By that I mean that Fr. Gregory has a unique style of using a play on words to create a clear and simple but profound and unforgettable mental picture. Most important, however, is the message of gratitude and unaffected love of God and others that comes through his words.

For this issue, I thought perhaps it would be best to follow Fr. Gregory's example, not say too much and let actions and pictures speak louder than words.

But before closing I am happy to say that on the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, this past January 10th in St. Louis, I was able to celebrate, with a group of local benefactors in St. Louis, a special Mass for all our benefactors, both spiritual

and material, living and deceased. It was very encouraging to meet, for the first time, a small section of the Priestly People, who in their generosity, dedication and thoughtfulness effectively represented all our friends, co-workers and benefactors among the Priestly People, both clergy and laity.

Along with Fr. Gregory and all the Servants of the Paraclete and the priests and brothers being assisted in various Paraclete houses, I would like to thank you for your continued support and help, particularly during this Year of the Priest.

Sincerely in Christ and our Blessed Mother,

Peter Lechner s.P.

Fr. Peter Lechner, s.P.



Processional Cross made from a beautiful icon donated by the late Gloria Meng. Gloria loved icons and sent many of them to the Servants of the Paraclete. This was chosen as a very special representation for incorporation into the processional cross for Father Gregory's 60th Anniversary of ordination celebration. Gloria's brother supports the work of the Servants of the Paraclete, particularly seminary formation.

It Was...

REFLECTIONS BY FATHER GREGORY MCCORMICK S.P. ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION.

TREASURES OF THOUGHT are often hidden in plain sight. When a request to write an article for the *Priestly People* was made I hesitated, wondering what acceptable contribution I could offer for publication. The words of a quote came to mind. The quote: “The saddest words of tongue or pen are these – ‘It might have been.’” How does this relate to my thoughts of the recent 60th anniversary celebration of my ordination?

If the words “It might have been” are a source of such sadness, what words could tell of the joyful wonder and grace filled gladness of reaching and holding a dream of a diamond day? What set of sentences or phrase could contain and hold the bundle of blessings, the beginnings and endings of the hundreds of days and the thousands of hours that are wrapped up in 60 years of a priest’s life?

Two words *could* do it. Two words *would* do it. Two words *did* it.

It was.



The “planners” gather before the liturgy begins to review last minute details
Deacon Steve, Father Gregory, Patrick O’Connell and Jim Forcier-Call



Father Gregory’s community members and friends
Father Ed Rolph, Father Peter Lechner (Servant General), Father Gregory, Brother Bernard, Deacon Steve and Patrick O’Connell



Recessional and closing of the 60th Anniversary Mass celebration



The serenity and peacefulness sought by Father Gerald Fitzgerald when he founded the Servants of the Paraclete more than 60 years ago is especially displayed in the winterscape of Jemez Springs. This is Lourdes House, the community house for the Servants of the Paraclete who reside in Jemez Springs.



Jim Forcier-Call, former Development Director for the Servants of the Paraclete, calls the community to worship at the start of Father Gregory's Anniversary Mass in honor of his 60 years as a priest.

Special Tribute to my Pastor!

FATHER LARRY PETTKE

Pastor, St. Louis Parish, Clinton Township, MI (Archdiocese of Detroit, MI)

Tribute by: Janet Huvaere

“CHRISTLIKE...

HE IS THERE WHEN YOU
NEED HELP; SHEPHERD
OF HIS PEOPLE”

Was it the day of the diamond - joyful and prayerful filled with music and song? It was. Was it filled with ceremony, symbol, words and gestures evoking reverence and respect? **It was.**

Was it full of meaning that gathered people in gratitude to better know, pray, and praise God? **It was.**

Was it an occasion when the ideas and ideals of parishioners were honored? **It was.**

Was it a time to pause, to remember parents, family, friends and all those places that in the plan of Providence brought us to this day? **It was.**

Was it an anniversary celebration that will be remembered? Was it special enough that the memory will linger for a lifetime? **It was.**

And now that December 20, 2009 has folded into history, was it really worth the time and treasure, the effort and expertise, the labor and love needed to so carefully plan and prepare, to perform and present this jubilee celebration? **It was.**

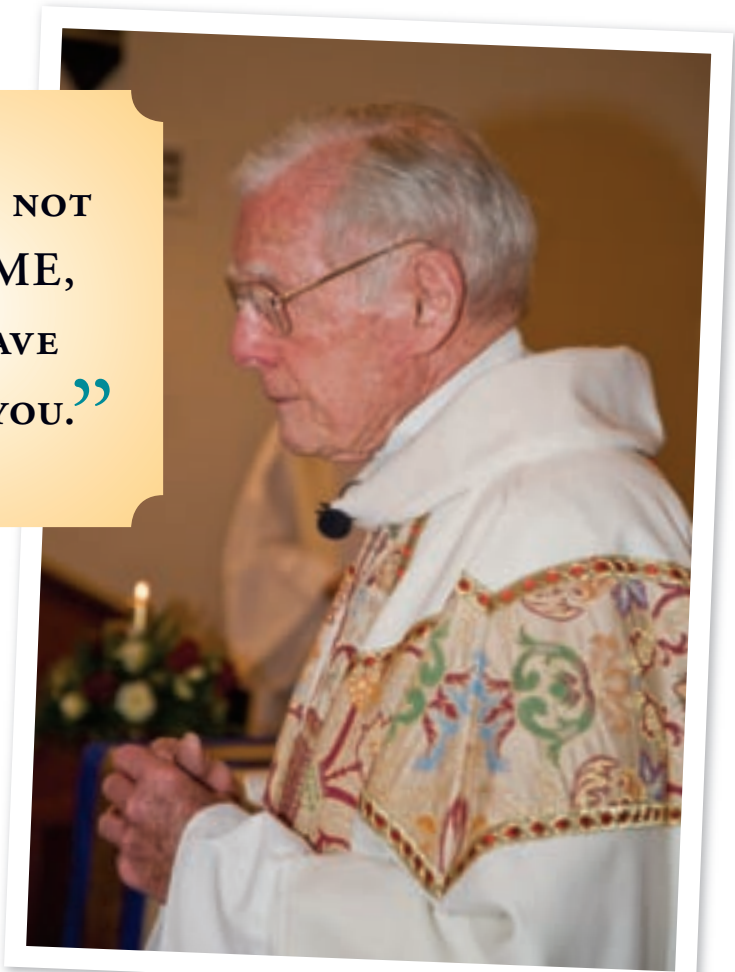
The beauty of that occasion, on that day, in that place was amazing. Was it really so astonishing? **It was.**

It was. It was. Thank God, it was.



“YOU HAVE NOT
CHOSEN ME,
BUT I HAVE
CHOSEN YOU.”

Holy waters from all places where Father Gregory lived and served (Ohio, Vermont, Missouri, Texas, California, Lourdes and Jemez Springs) during his priesthood were mixed and used to bless the congregation present for this wonderful celebration.



Father Gregory experiences solemn moments during the liturgy.

Year of the Priest

Remember your Priest (pastor, relative, and friend) with a special tribute in our Priestly People Newsletter. We will begin congratulating Priests during this special year by listing their name and who wanted to remember them in our monthly newsletters. If you would like to tell us about this wonderful Priest, please do so in your note to us to pay special tribute to him.

Tribute to Father _____
(Name of Priest)

Name of person sending tribute _____

Comments about the priest you have chosen to congratulate! _____



Father Gregory pours the holy water representing each of the places where he has served in his priesthood.

2009 Support – Servants of the Paraclete

# Donors	1029	Restricted	\$25,000.00
# Gifts	2855	Donations	\$133,000.00
Bequests	\$90,657.00	Average gift	\$25.00

Thank you for your support of our very special ministry to Priests and Religious Brothers.

“The strongest oak tree of the forest is not the one that is protected from the storm and hidden from the sun. It’s the one that stands in the open where it is compelled to struggle for its existence against the winds and rains and the scorching sun.”

We continue to need your support for our work!



Father Gregory blesses the community with the holy waters that have been collected from all parts of the world, symbolizing his service as a priest in those areas.



The community of parishioners, family, friends, fellow priests and religious brothers extend their hand over Father Gregory in a special blessing of thanksgiving for his ministry of the priesthood.



Ernest Meng and Father Peter on a recent visit to Brooklyn, NY.

DONOR NEWS

Paraclete Father’s Bridge Club

A hearty group of 10 couples play bridge each month. They play in pairs of 4. They are the remaining couples of what started over 35 years ago as a bridge club that supported the work of the Servants of the Paraclete. There one time a year gift was what they collected during the year as fees for playing bridge. Quite a novel idea! A great big **THANKS** for your donation and having fun at the same time.

“LORD, WHEN YOU CAME TO THE SEASHORE.
YOU WEREN'T SEEKING THE WISE OR THE WEALTHY,
BUT ONLY ASKING THAT I MIGHT FOLLOW.

LORD, YOU KNEW WHAT MY BOAT CARRIED:
NEITHER MONEY NOR WEAPONS FOR FIGHTING,
BUT NETS FOR FISHING, MY DAILY LABOR.

LORD HAVE YOU NEED OF MY LABOR,
HANDS FOR SERVICE, A HEART MADE FOR LOVING,
MY ARMS FOR LIFTING THE POOR AND BROKEN

LORD, SEND ME WHERE YOU WOULD HAVE ME,
TO A VILLAGE OR HEART OF THE CITY;
I WILL REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE WITH ME.

O LORD, IN MY EYES YOU ARE GAZING,
KINDLY SMILING, MY NAME YOU WERE SAYING;
ALL I TREASURED, I HAVE LEFT ON THE SAND THERE;
CLOSE TO YOU, I WILL FIND OTHER SEAS.”

Hymn: Lord, When you Come
OCP Publications



Special Tribute to my Pastor!

FATHER EUGENE SLOMBA

Pastor, Ascension Catholic Church, Batavia, NY (Diocese of Buffalo, NY)

Tribute by: Alvina Pigula

“VERY DEDICATED IN CARING FOR TWO PARISHES WHICH HAVE MERGED... ST. ANTHONY AND SACRED HEART IN BATAVIA, NY)”

Greeting the many who attended Father Gregory's 60th Anniversary of Priesthood.

Electronic Transfer of Funds

If you are interested in a monthly donation, please contact the development office.

Electronic Transfer of Funds is the easiest way to donate to the ministry of the Servants of the Paraclete. Every gift counts! The forms are simple to fill out and are handled by a company that works with many religious organizations in assisting them with funding these transfers.

Please drop this form in the envelope included in the newsletter and we will be happy to get the information to you.

Please send me Electronic Fund Transfer information so that I make a monthly donation!





Servants of the Paraclete
 PO Box 9
 Cedar Hill, MO 63016

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

January
 Newsletter

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MASS STIPENDS

Please remember your loved ones with a mass offered by one of the Servants of the Paraclete. Each of the Priests receives monthly stipends to offer on behalf of our donors and their family and friends. Please consider a special holiday remembrance with a mass offering. Please enclose your offering and the names of those you wish the Servants to remember during the celebration of liturgy.

Names of loved ones to be remembered:

DEVELOPMENT OFFICE INFORMATION

Tax letters for 2009 are being sent to most everyone who has donated during 2009. The reason for that is as we transfer to new computer software, the old software did not want to talk to the new, therefore at the risk of losing information, likely every donor will get a tax receipt this year.

Please notify the development office if there is a mistake on the statement.

Thank you for your understanding.

With the new newsletter format, please feel free to send mass stipends, EFT requests and tributes for your Priest. We have received requests for all of the items that we have offered in our newsletters.

Thank you!