

SCJ NEWS

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

February 2011

In this issue...

SCJ successfully defends doctoral thesis in Rome, p. 4

New mission begins in Paraguay, p. 5

Canadian SCJ prepares to publish second "final" book, p. 7



ABOVE: Fr. Mac receives good wishes from parishioners at Our Lady of Guadalupe, Raymondville. Except for his six years as provincial superior, Fr. Mac served in the Rio Grande Valley continuously since 1975.

"We will not forget you"

In February, the Priests of the Sacred Heart returned ministry of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Raymondville, Texas, as well as other parishes and missions in Willacy and Hidalgo Counties, to the Diocese of Brownsville.

During the weekend of January 15, parishes held a celebration to honor the SCJs' 42 years in the Rio Grande Valley. As Fr. Richard MacDonald, SCJ, states in his reflection on the celebration weekend, "This weekend truly was a celebration, it was not sad. We gave thanks for our journey together."

A booklet, "We Will Not Forget You" was produced as a keepsake from that celebration. The following history of the SCJs' presence in the Valley is based on a text prepared by Fr. Mac, the last SCJ pastor of OLG, Raymondville.

Ministry in Rio Grande Valley starts in Indiana

The year was 1967 and the place was somewhere in Marshall County in northern Indiana. The Priests of the Sacred Heart ran a minor seminary — Divine Heart — in Donaldson, and the superior of the seminary was an SCJ named Fr. Tom Sheehy.

Fr. Tom learned that migrant workers were out in the fields near the seminary picking tomatoes and

pickles under the worst of conditions and for a miserable salary. He sought out the migrant camps to meet with the Mexican-American families and learn their story. He soon found out that they had come from Texas, traveling quite a distance in their old trucks from Willacy County.

The rest of the story continued until February of this year.



Fr. Tom Sheehy, whose concern for migrant workers led the SCJs to the Rio Grande Valley.

First days in Texas

Just months after Fr. Tom's visit with the migrants he, Fr. Peter Mastrobuono, SCJ and Br. Frank Clancy, SCJ (Br. Frank is now Father Frank) took up residence in an old house next to Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Raymondville. The SCJs were told that ministry in the area would be difficult, but they were committed to serving the migrant families of the area.

Fr. Peter ministered briefly in Brownsville prior to the SCJs' "official" beginning in the diocese when Fr. Tom was named pastor of OLG, Raymondville, with responsibility for the three mission churches of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini in Hargill, St.



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Patrick in Lasara, and Sacred Heart in San Perlita (San Perlita is now as St. Anne).

The early years were difficult for everyone. The SCJs needed to learn the language and culture of the area, as well as meet the challenge of trying to analyze the many social elements of poverty that made education a huge challenge and survival skills a priority. Truly, the SCJs were learning about a world that they were not totally prepared to enter. But the families and the people welcomed the SCJs with open arms.

The SCJs learned that there is a unique flavor to "The Valley," including the use of three languages: Spanish, English and "Tex-Mex." It is a border environment that spills over two countries — Mexico and the United States — that is often forgotten by the rest of the world.

Four years after Fr. Tom arrived he expressed his desire to do more for the migrant workers. He knew their struggles to get fair wages and the obstacles they faced in educating their children. More SCJs came to the Valley. In 1973 Fr. Tom Garvey, SCJ, was named pastor of OLG. Joining him in Willacy County were SCJ Frs. Frank Guenter and George Balderrama, as well as Fr. Peter Mastrobuono who had been in Brownsville.

Fr. Garvey encouraged Fr. Richard MacDonald, SCJ, to join them. In 1975 Fr. Mac left seminary ministry and began Spanish studies in Mexico. In 1978 he was named the third SCJ pastor of OLG, Raymondville.

The SCJs staffed two parishes in Brownsville (OLG until 1976 and Our Lady of Good Counsel until 1984) but in 1984 left the area to focus their efforts in Willacy County.

Frs. Mac and Frank Burshnick, SCJ, took on ministry at Prince of Peace in Lyford with the missions of St. Martin of Tours in Sebastian and Santa Monica in Santa Monica. In 1984 Fr. Frank Clancy, SCJ, joined the Willacy SCJ community and began hospital chaplaincy at Valley Baptist Hospital in Harlingen.

"It was a major breakthrough for the community when the SCJs built a community house," said Fr. Mac.

"They then saw themselves not so much as individuals reaching out to the people but as a religious community that understood its mission and reached out in a coordinated style of ministry that grew out of the religious life of the community."

In 1985 Our Lady of Guadalupe in Raymondville built a new church; Fr. Ralph Intranuovo, SCJ, was the pastor. Frs. Jim Walters, SCJ, and Doug Watson, SCJ, were also a part of the parish team in Willacy County. The construction of the church required significant financial assistance from the diocese and the SCJs. "It was a difficult time for the SCJ community, which was trying to determine whether it was possible to continue in Willacy with a limited number of SCJs," said Fr. Mac.

"It should be noted," he contin-

ued, "that several SCJ brothers were vital to our ministry during these years. They included Brs. Tim Murphy and Frank Presto. Their gifts made the ministry and parishes stronger and better organized."

A pastoral team, "The Willacy County Catholic Communities" was developed which included Frs. Greg Speck, SCJ, and Steve Pujdak, SCJ, as well as Sr. Emily Morgan of the Mercy Sisters. "Sr. Emily was key to the educational aspects of our work," said Fr. Mac. "With her the goal was to 'teach the teachers!'"

Lay participation and leadership was growing in the parishes. And just as important, these lay people were training their replacements for CCD, RCIA and baptism classes so that the next generation of teachers and leaders were being recruited and



Fr. Mac, far left, looks on as Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, blesses the new shrine at OLG, Raymondville.

formed at the same time.

"It was through the cooperative efforts of everyone — SCJ and the laity — that we became an effective pastoral team in Willacy County," said Fr. Mac. "Our liturgies united us and nourished our efforts."

Starting in 1992, a series of major construction projects took place. "It was only possible because it came under the banner of the WCCC, as our union of parishes and missions was called," said Fr. Mac.

Five buildings were built or renovated under one contractor and architect. Sebastian and Lasara got much needed parish halls and the halls in Lyford and Raymondville were renovated and restored. A new parish office building also went up in Raymondville. The church and hall in Hargill were renovated and expanded. San Perlita and Lasara saw new churches go up. Grants covered some of the work as the buildings were used for both religious as well as general community services.

"Through one pastoral mission with unified goals we had the strength to do what could not have been done individually at each of these parishes and missions," said Fr. Mac.

While parish ministry was the most visible sign of the SCJs' presence in Willacy County, the SCJ presence went well beyond the churches and missions. "The care of the sick and dying was always a high priority for the SCJs," said Fr. Mac. As noted earlier, Fr. Frank Clancy spent many years as a hospital chaplain in Harlingen. Fr. Chuck Kelly, SCJ, specialized in ministry to those in hospice.

There were SCJs in full-time social justice ministry (Br. Lenny Zaworski, SCJ), immigration law (Fr. Jim Brackin, SCJ), family counseling and education.

The impact of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth on health care and Sr. Emily Morgan in education, continues to be felt.

The last SCJ pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Raymondville, was Fr. Mac. He arrived in 1975 with no parish experience and not a word of Spanish in his vocabulary. Except for six years as provincial superior, Fr.

Mac has remained in the Valley and with the people of Willacy until the parishes and missions of the WCCC were returned to the Diocese of Brownsville.

"Only part of the story can be told in these words," said Fr. Mac. "May we all go forward in the love of the Sacred Heart."

"Most important was the support of my SCJ brothers"

There were many special moments during the weekend celebration of the SCJs' 42 years of ministry in Willacy and Hidalgo Counties but for Fr. Richard MacDonald "it was the support of my SCJ brothers, my brothers in community, that meant the most to me. That so many of them came to celebrate with us, it meant more to me than what I could ever express in words."

Joining Fr. Mac, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and SCJ Frs. Frank Clancy and Tom Westhoven, members of the pastoral team, were SCJs from around the country including Br. Long Nguyen, Fr. Frank Wittouck, Fr. Jack Kurps, Fr. Tony Russo, Fr. Frank Burshnick, Fr. Peter Mastrobuono, Fr. Vien Nguyen, Fr. Joseph Dinh, Fr. Ed Kilianski, Fr. Tim Gray, Fr. John Czyzynski, Fr. Mike Burke, Fr. Rob Naglich and Fr. Tom Cassidy.

"That made a huge impact on the people," said Fr. Mac. "Seeing all of those SCJs in the sanctuary was a visible sign of how important the people of the Valley are to the Priests of the Sacred Heart."

Last year the provincial administration made the difficult decision to return Our Lady of Guadalupe, Raymondville, and the other parishes of Willacy County, to the Diocese of Brownsville for pastoral care. The people of the parishes were informed



Fr. Tom Westhoven and Fr. Frank Clancy (in wheelchair) make their way to the shrine dedication. Fr. Frank spent many years as a hospital chaplain at Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen. Fr. Tom assisted with pastoral ministry in the Valley during the last months of the SCJs' assignment to the area.

of the decision in April, 2010. At first there was anger, "but soon, the people decided to celebrate our time together," said Fr. Mac. "This weekend truly was a celebration, it was not sad. We gave thanks for our journey together." Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville was the main celebrant. During the liturgy he recognized people who represented the parishes and missions that had been served by the SCJs. "It was incredible, so many people came," said Fr. Mac. When asked to estimate how many people were there

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Speaking at the celebration: Fr. Tom Cassidy (top) and Bishop Daniel Flores.

he said that “we made 750 dinners and they were all gone!”

Not only were SCJs and parishioners at the celebration, but local civic leaders as well. The City of Raymondville proclaimed a “Priests of the Sacred Heart Appreciation Day” and the county judge made a similar proclamation.

Following the liturgy, the bishop blessed a shrine to Our Lady of

Guadalupe that was erected by the people of Willacy County as a tribute to the SCJs. The text on the shrine’s plaque sums up the spirit of the celebration:

“These bronze statues of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego were placed here by the people to express their appreciation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart who served in the communities of Harlingen, Brownsville, Raymondville, San Perlita, Lasara, Hargill, Lyford, Sebastian and Santa Monica.

“Known as the SCJs, these priests and brothers formed what was called the Willacy County Catholic Communities and trained hundreds of us lay women and men to be leaders and teachers. They were involved in our lives and encouraged us to work for justice and peace. They taught us to know our own dignity and worth as well as the value of peoples of every race and creed, to welcome all immigrants as God’s children.

“They stayed with us all of these years telling us of the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, ‘the heart of a Father, the heart of a Mother, the heart of a Shepherd.’ Words of the founder of the SCJs, Leo John Dehon.”



Fr. David Szatkowski responds to questions during his doctoral defense in Canon Law at the Angelicum in Rome. He now serves as the province canon lawyer, teaches at SHST and is director of SHST’s ESL program.

That’s DOCTOR Szatkowski to you!

We can now officially call him DOCTOR David Szatkowski, SCJ.

On January 29, Fr. David defended his doctoral thesis in canon law at the Angelicum (Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas) in Rome. In attendance were SCJ representatives from the U.S. Province (Fr. Jack Kurps and Fr. Francis Vu Tran), members of the General Curia (including Fr. José Ornelas Carvalho, superior general, Fr. Aquilino Mielgo Domínguez, general treasurer, and Fr. John van den Hengel, general counselor), SCJs from the International College and friends.

Fr. Tom Cassidy, provincial superior, had hoped to be there as well but an East Coast snowstorm cancelled his flight to Rome.

Fr. David began his studies in canon law in 2005. After he earned his licentiate Fr. Tom encouraged him to continue his work toward the doctorate. In 2010 he completed his thesis: “The Jurisdiction of the Ordinary in a Clerical Religious Institute of Pontifical Right to Restore Justice in

Particular cases: Cann. 695, 1 and 1395, 1 and successive changes.”

In layman’s terms, Fr. David explained that “the focus of the thesis is about the power of the major superior to resolve cases of child abuse.”

When asked about his research, Fr. David said that “The Code of Canon Law, reformed by John Paul II, was always at the heart of my research. The concept of ‘communion,’ which I used frequently in my work, I got from Eugene Corecco, a canon lawyer in Switzerland. However, the most important theory for my thesis was developed by Robert Schreiter, an American. His research and writings on the ministry of reconciliation, Christ’s mission to reconcile God with humanity, I believe to be important and useful for canonists also. Speaking to the task of creating an encounter between the victim and the offender, he points a way for us to find a way to restore both victim and offender to a new humanity.”

Fr. David acknowledged that top-

ic is emotionally charged. "When I researched the story of abused children I was angry. It is a crime against nature. And this, in my opinion, is part of why the justice of law cannot be an emotional action. What did Jesus say after the crucifixion? 'Peace be with you.' It is not because Jesus was not angry. But he moved beyond his own anger.

"The world of revenge is focused on the concept of an ear for an ear, an eye for an eye, a hand for a hand. Jesus came precisely to change this; we, as lawyers, need to put aside our emotions. When the law is violated, when there is a violation against a child of God, the goal must not be to justify the violation but instead to find the balance between justice and God's mercy. This is because both the offender and the victim need to be seen as children of God."

Although he could have done his studies in North America, Fr. David said that the Angelicum had been recommended to him by other canonists. Studying there also allowed him the opportunity to live with the SCJs' international community in Rome.

"It is worth a person's time to live and study in Rome," he said. "Not only is the experience of the congregation different but so is the experience of Church and education. It is eye-opening on many levels."

Since September, 2010, Fr. David has been an associate professor of canon law at Sacred Heart School of Theology in Hales Corners, Wis. Fr. David is also director of SHST's ESL program.



Fr. David receives congratulations from Fr. José Ornelas Carvalho, SCJ, superior general.

SCJs begin ministry in Paraguay

In the last issue of the *SCJ News* we noted that the Priests of the Sacred Heart had begun a new mission in Chad. However, this wasn't the only new effort by the congregation. In 2010 the SCJs also began ministry in Paraguay.

Two SCJ priests, Frs. Arildo Ferrari of Brazil and Quinto Regazzoni of Argentina, established the first SCJ community in the town of Limpio, near the country's capital. A second two-person team was sent to the Diocese of San Juan Bautista near the Argentine border. Fr. Cezar Hammes, SCJ, of Brazil, and Fr. Mario Lavato, SCJ, Argentina, make up this second team.

The new mission is through a combined effort of all the SCJ provinces in South America, including those in Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay.

Paraguay is bordered by Argentina to the south and southwest, Brazil to the east and northeast, and Bolivia to the northwest. Due to its central location in South America, it is sometimes referred to as *Corazón de América*, or the Heart of America.

"It is a very poor country; one of the poorest countries in Latin America," said Fr. Arildo Ferrari. There has been some development in recent years, thanks in particular to the cultivation of soy, "but the wealth has been concentrated in the hands of just few landowners.

"Of the country's 6 million people, almost half a million live in the capital Asuncion, one of the oldest cities in Latin America." Much of the rest of the population is poor peasants in the rural areas.

"Few people have had a proper Christian formation," continued Fr.

Arildo. "The communities are characterized by a massive presence of young people, which gives us much hope but also concern. We wonder where the parents are. The impression is that these young people are often left to themselves."

Because of this, the SCJs are focusing on youth ministry.

Why did the SCJs go to Paraguay?

"We decided to start a new mission in Latin America in 2007, but it wasn't until 2009 that we had the approval of our provinces," said Fr. Arildo. Administratively, the Paraguay mission is linked to the South Brazilian Province, though

as noted, it is an endeavor of all of the SCJ entities in South America.

The SCJs were invited to Paraguay by Bishop Mario Melanio Medina Salinas of the Diocese of San Juan Bautista de Las Misiones. "He asked us to bring our spirituality and pastoral abilities," said Fr. Arildo. There are now five SCJs in the

country with responsibility for four parishes.

But beyond parish ministry, the SCJs hope to continue their focus on youth, developing educational and vocational possibilities for the area's many young people.

"It is hard work," said Fr. Arildo, "but it is already bearing results." Soon, the SCJs plan to develop a "drop-in" center for youth, an alternative to the streets.

"We have high hopes for the future with the help of our international congregation," said Fr. Arildo.



Outreach to youth is a priority for SCJs in Paraguay.

The swan still sings

When Fr. Herman Falke, SCJ, turned 80 he published *Sculpted Swan Songs*. It was his eighth book and one that featured many new or yet unpublished sculptures and paintings. But since it was to be a “swan song,” it also included a few works that had appeared in other publications, pieces that “are especially dear to me and probably represent my best creative work,” he said.

What was to be his last book was followed a year later by another final book. *P.S. There's More; Latest Gleanings of My Sculptures and Paintings* was completed in 2009 and not only highlighted works completed after his “swan song,” but also commemorated his 18 years of pastoral ministry in Osgood Township, Ontario, at St. Brigid and St. John parishes. He retired from parish ministry in December, 2009.

In 2011 the swan still sings and at 82 Fr. Herman is working on yet another book, one he hopes to have completed by the end of the year. “For fun, I’ve set a deadline of November 11, 11-11-11,” he said.

This tenth book is a collaborative effort with Fr. Piet Schellens, SCJ, of the Dutch-Flemish Confederation. The two have worked together on previous books.

“Upon my retirement I came upon a major project that I had wanted to do for years – compose a book of my best biblical sculptures combined with contemporary reflections,” said Fr. Herman. The book will include approximately 110 works based on biblical passages. Most of the sculptures to be featured are ones that he has already done, but “I did six new ones to fill in a few gaps.”

Fr. Piet Schellens first viewed Fr. Herman’s sculptures when he visited Canada during his term as provincial superior of the Dutch Province. Soon,



the two collaborated on a book published in the Netherlands. It was the first of four books authored by Fr. Piet and illustrated with the sculptures of Fr. Herman.

This fifth collaborative work will be offered in Dutch, English and French. Although each edition will feature the same sculptures, the reflections will be tailored to the country in which the book is published. “For example, in Canada [the English and French editions] when we reflect on Jesus taking care of the least among us we will speak about the native people and how so many live in poverty,” said Fr. Herman. “But in Holland, we will address the situation of refugees.”

If all goes as planned, the English and French editions of the book will be distributed as Christmas gifts to benefactors of the Canadian Region. The book will also be available through Amazon.com, as are some of Fr. Herman’s previous works.

Who is Fr. Herman?

An accomplished artist, Fr. Herman’s work is found in churches, schools, museums, public buildings and in private collections.



ABOVE: A piece Fr. Herman created for his 10th book. LOWER: Fr. Herman reviews another newly completed piece.

“For over half a century I have managed to function as a priest - sculptor,” said Fr. Herman “It is no surprise, therefore, that I treat my sculpting as an apostolate with the specific purpose of making

Jesus Christ more meaningful to those who see my work. For instance, as a priest I am often dealing with people in their physical or mental suffering. They sometimes ask, 'does suffering make any sense?' This is where the example of Jesus is so powerful.

"To me, in my western culture, suffering and redemption make better sense in a fully human Jesus who accepts being victimized in utter vulnerability. In making this complete surrender, he indeed becomes the Incarnation of God's love.

"In my art I want to touch the unconditional realness of his humanness, and I use the emotional impact of ordinariness, such as nakedness, genuine pain, even impulsiveness of character."

Originally from the Netherlands, Fr. Herman was first professed in 1949. He came to Canada as a seminarian in 1952 and was ordained in 1954.

Art has been an important part of his life for as long as he can remember. In fact, one of his early superiors suggested that he study art full-time. "But I felt a dual call," he said. "It's a beautiful combination to be an artist-pastor, artist-teacher... my ministries have expanded who I am and what I can create."

Fr. Herman taught high school art and English for 35 years, including eight years at St. Mary's College in Uganda as a CUSO volunteer (CUSO is a North American organization that promotes sustainable development through international volunteering).

"Those six years were a formative inspiration for my own art work," wrote Fr. Herman in *Sculpted Swan Songs*. "Immersion in the African milieu changed my Western way of evaluating and creatively recording life. It taught me to be open to other cultures and not simply stampede in with my preconceived Western ideas."

Fr. Herman is a member of the Dehon House community in Ottawa; his studio is in the basement of the community house and the building's three floors have become a showcase for much of his art.



The changing face of the Catholic Church

"The church is becoming a Third World church in many ways," said Fr. Tom Cassidy, SCJ, in an interview in the February 18 Religious Life section of the *National Catholic Reporter*. "I don't mean it in a pejorative sense. The church has new roots — African roots, Asian roots. I spent 12 years on the general council and the real advantage to me was living outside my own culture, seeing the world from a different perspective. I think this has certainly helped enrich

my religious life, my congregation and the church."

Fr. Tom, provincial superior of the U.S. Province, was interviewed by NCR in his role as president of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM). Reflecting on the challenges of this international shift in the church, Fr. Tom said that "It certainly does bring a challenge. I would say many communities in the U.S. have members that come from other parts of the world, whether it be Latin America or Africa or Asia. And that's a new reality.

"In my own community, we have a number of Vietnamese. And I have learned to enjoy and celebrate Lunar New Year. Which is not something we would have done before — it just wasn't part of our experience. You know they bring that part of their tradition and we have learned to embrace it. It does create challenges of dealing with different cultures, different world views, different traditions. You become a melting pot."

The full text of Fr. Tom's interview is available at the province

Why the Priests of the Sacred Heart?

“There are two fundamental things that attracted me to the Priests of the Sacred Heart. First, I like the way that we take care of each other. I really feel support from the community; I feel welcome and I have come to believe that God takes care of me through this community. Second, the SCJs offer so many opportunities in pastoral and educational experiences which allow me to grow in knowledge, but also, to grow in my faith and vocation.”



Frater Fernando

-- Frater Luis Fernando Orozco Cardona, SCJ, first year in vows

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Boot camp grad

Fr. Mark Mastin, SCJ, completed the first step in the process to becoming a chaplain with the U.S. Army. In February he graduated from boot camp (basic training). "I received my beret in a military ceremony," he wrote.

Reflecting on his first month, he added that "It has been a good experience for me, especially at my age. I have been in at least the top 15 percent in my physical training and academic studies. There are just under 100 students in my class. I also have a leadership role in my platoon, in charge of all training and scheduling for a platoon. It is a very humbling process that one goes through with the Chaplaincy Officer Program. This whole process is a four-year officer's school program compressed into four months. You can imagine the hard work that we go through morning and night. I am up at 4:30 a.m. and get to bed at 11:00 p.m. And the next phases are supposed to be harder!

"The SGLs — our officer chaplain trainers — along with the non-com-

missioned officers, are great men and women who teach us and PUSH us. We have been trained in the same way that the enlisted are except that we do not carry or fire weapons. Chaplains are classified as non-combatants.

"My classmates have been great too. I have participated in many forms of ecumenical gatherings but this has been the most concentrated experience I have had. I am only one of four Catholic priests at the school."

St. Joseph's reaccredited

St. Joseph's Indian School in Chamberlain, SD, just received notice that it has been reaccredited by the Council on Accreditation.

COA reaccreditation is considered the gold standard in evaluation of residential schools such as St. Joseph's, a school that focuses on "at risk" Native American children. "The COA reaccreditation process involves a detailed review and analysis of both an organization's administrative operations and its service delivery practice," states COA. In other words, it reviews what the school says that it is going to do and then whether it actually does it. Always, the question is asked, "How are these children served? Are established standards being met when it comes to the care and education of these children?"

"COA congratulates St. Joseph's Indian School for their hard work and wonderful achievement and is proud to have it as part of COA's Community of Excellence," wrote the COA representatives in their final report.

SCJ named Brazil primate

On January 12 Pope Benedict XVI named Archbishop Murilo Sebastiao Ramos Krieger, SCJ, of Florianopolis, Brazil, as archbishop of Sao Salvador da Bahia, Brazil. He

succeeds Cardinal Geraldo Majella Agnelo, who submitted his resignation, as is Church practice, when he turned 75.

In his new position, Archbishop Ramos Krieger will serve as primate of Brazil.

Archbishop Ramos Krieger was born in 1943 in Brusque, in the Archdiocese of Florianópolis, Brazil. He professed first vows with the Priests of the Sacred Heart in 1964 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1969. He did his philosophical and theological studies at the SCJs' seminaries in Brazil and earned a post-graduate degree in spirituality in Rome.



Archbishop Krieger

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