



Volume 6, Issue 1

The Official Newsletter of the Legionaries of Christ and the Regnum Christi Movement

## 33 LEGIONARIES ORDAINED!

Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello, the President of the Governate of the Vatican City State and President of the Pontifical Commission for the Vatican City State, ordained 33 Legionaries of Christ to the priesthood in the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls. More than three thousand people attended the ceremony in Rome on December 16th.

In his homily, Cardinal Bertello told them, "... you must always be a minister of Christ Jesus, as if your person disappears in front of his because he will work in you and through you. Don't say, maybe the priest is an alter Christus and acts in persona Christi. This is the path to holiness which you must resume daily with humility, obedience and charity in order to make this your ministry."

The 33 new priests come from 11 countries: Italy (1), Slovakia (1), Brazil (5), Canada (1), El Salvador (2), Venezuela (3), Spain (1), Colombia (1), Mexico (13), the Philippines (1) and the United States (4).

Father Eduardo Robles-Gil, LC, the General Director of the Legionaries of Christ and the Regnum Christi Movement, commented: "It is an immense joy to be able to offer the Church 33 new priests. Through their priestly ministry they will collaborate to make the merciful love of God present in the hearts of people and in society ..."



33 Legionaries lie prostrate while the congregation calls on the saints to guide them in their priesthood.



## FOUR PRIESTS – FOUR STORIES

Testimonials by many of our new priests are available on the ordination website – some written in Spanish and four of our North American priests writing in English. Their stories are summarized below, showing the diversity of men called to the priesthood. You can read the complete testimonials at: <http://www.regnumchristi.org/sites/ordenaciones2017/en/>.

### FR. ANDREW TARLETON

Fr. Andrew was raised in southern Louisiana where his parents worked hard to send their children to parochial school. He attended a weekly Legionary youth group and enjoyed their summer camps. When the youth group visited the Legion's high-school seminary in New Hampshire, he felt the urge to go to school there and become a priest. It was a hard decision for his parents but, Fr. Andrew says, "I will forever be grateful to them for making the ultimate sacrifice of offering their son to God to be His priest." There have been many joys, many difficulties, and many lessons learned along the way. When he shares his vocation story he likes say, "I was the most normal guy and God did something amazing through me. I hope my story helps people to realize that God can do incredible things in their lives too – if they let Him."



### FR. JOHN KLEIN

Fr. John grew up in Missouri, the second oldest of four children. One part of his Catholic formation was Family prayer in the morning and evening. Although sports were an important part of his middle and high school years, he

loved music the most. After two years as an electrical engineering major in college, Fr. John decided to pursue music and moved to Nashville, TN, to study music production. He became friends with many Protestants, attending their Bible studies and playing in Christian bands, while still attending Mass on weekends. After feeling the pull toward the priesthood, he visited the Legion of Christ website and immediately felt this was where he was supposed to be. Since entering the novitiate in 2006, Fr. John has played music for countless Catholic retreats, two World Youth Day events, and has recorded two CDs.

Fr. David, from Baton Rouge, Louisiana was also among the 33 Legionaries ordained in December ►

### FR. MICHAEL BAGGOT

After a high-school conversion from agnosticism, Fr. Baggot enrolled at Christendom College, a Catholic university in Virginia, where he says, "years of accumulated secular prejudices and biases melted before the scorching ray of truth." During his senior year, he visited the Legionary seminary in Cheshire where he later entered as a novice. In addition to his advanced studies in Rome, Fr. Michael has worked as a Correspondent for UNESCO Chair of Bioethics and Human Rights, a guide for the Art & Faith tour for the Vatican Museums, a professor at the Pontifical University Regina Apostolorum, and a contributor to First Things, a journal of religion and public life. With such wide-ranging experience, Fr. Michael will bring many insights to his assignment as a priest.



### FR. ADAM ZETTEL



Fr. Adam grew up in Ontario, Canada on a little dairy farm. The family of six children attended an active parish with adoration, prayers groups, and monthly healing Masses. Above all, Fr. Adam was drawn to the Passion of Christ and sensed a vocation to suffer in union with Christ. He tried

to ignore the call to the priesthood until at a healing Mass, the priest delivered a prophetic message: "I believe the Holy Spirit is telling me that there is someone here tonight whom God is calling to be a priest." He entered the novitiate in Cheshire and now, as a priest, his heart's desire is fulfilled. In his vocation story he wrote: "I knew that if I united my heart to his he could say, 'Now I have a friend to suffer with me.' What joy and gratitude we would have towards each other if we shared this suffering for the whole world."

### FR. DAVID SPILLANE



## GOD IS IN CONTROL

A man who says “yes” to God by entering the Legionaries of Christ is saying “yes” to God’s taking control. From that moment on, he’d better fasten his seatbelt and get ready for wherever God wants to take him.

I was ordained in Rome, on Christmas Eve of 2005. The first place God took me, upon completing a degree in Dogmatic Theology in June, 2006, was the Philippines. The Regnum Christi Movement had already existed there for several years due to the incredible work of a pair of Regnum Christi couples, but no Legionary community was there at that time.

My first assignments were in young adult and youth ministry in the Regnum Christi Movement. My primary apostolates, aside from Regnum Christi formation, were Conquest and Mission Youth. I loved these apostolates because they allowed me to witness the way God slowly transforms the hearts of ordinary young people, and how he works through them when they let Him. This was especially clear on missions.

During my first Holy Week Mission, for example, I brought a group of High School and College aged missionaries to the island of Tingloy for a week. Tingloy is a small fishing island, maybe seven miles long by one mile wide, off the coast of Batangas. It has no running water. There is little electricity. The roads are mostly dirt trails. The only motor vehicles are small “bangkas,” or pontoon boats. We slept in a cramped room above the town well, surrounded by pigs and chickens.

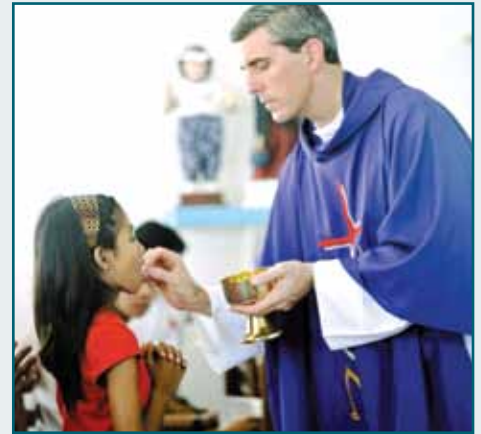
One afternoon I had walked about 45 minutes to the next town to celebrate Mass and hear Confessions. Afterwards, exhausted, I took a boat in the dark back to my town of Maricaban.

About five minutes into my dinner of fish and rice, a knock came on the door. The people from the town I had just left wanted me to come back. There was an old woman, dying of some painful chest

disease, who needed Anointing. I went back to that town and gave her the Anointing, then returned to my home base. The next day, she died. It had been over 40 years since she had received the sacraments. On the last day of her life, God had brought the unlikely of people into her life to prepare her for death.

After nine years in Manila, God called me to serve at St. Peter’s-St. Denis parish in Yonkers, New York. This was a whole new experience for me, and very beautiful. St. Peter’s-St Denis is a Latino parish with a vibrant youth ministry. During my two years there, I heard countless hours of Confessions and was able to learn a great deal about Latino Charismatic spirituality.

In September, I was assigned to the crown-jewel of the Legion in the US – Cheshire, Connecticut, where we have our Novitiate and College of Humanities. It’s a huge grace to live with the seminarians and to see their fervor. It’s even better to share their stories with people and invite them to support the brothers’ formation. I don’t know how long God will want me here, but it doesn’t really matter. I know He’s in control.



Fr. Eric Nielsen while serving in the Philippines.



Fr. Eric with the parish youth group in Yonkers, New York

# HOW TO AVOID PURGATORY

Whenever we think of our own Judgment before God and where we will end up after we die, most of us agree on one thing: we want to avoid ending up in Hell.

Hopefully, we will all be successful in that. We want to end up in Heaven and realize that any sacrifice necessary to get there is worth it. However, there is another possibility that many serious Catholics expect to experience, although it is very disagreeable: Purgatory.

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St. Thérèse of Lisieux teaches us to aim for Heaven. She says that if we do three things, God will help us avoid Purgatory.

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Who goes to Purgatory? People who haven't reached the fullness of love necessary to reach Heaven. They love God, but not enough. They love other things too much to let go, so they go to Purgatory until they can let go of the things that are keeping them from fully embracing God.

What is Purgatory like? Before he became Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Ratzinger described it as a state of someone who, although they can clearly see the joy of having Christ's friendship for all eternity (what theologians call the Beatific Vision), cannot yet fully experience that friendship. It might be compared to the situation of a starving man, who can see, smell and maybe even taste his favorite meal, but cannot eat it – as if it were behind a pane of glass. Imagine the agony of someone who is starving, but cannot eat food that is right in front of him. It might also be compared to seeing the person you love most in the world in front of you. You want to talk to him, but he can't see or hear you.

The emptiness of this unfulfilled desire for God is so powerful, that it is described as burning like fire.

So, unlike what many people think,

Purgatory is not so much a punishment imposed by God as the condition of someone who cannot reach what they most desire. That person must let go of everything that holds them back from being with God.



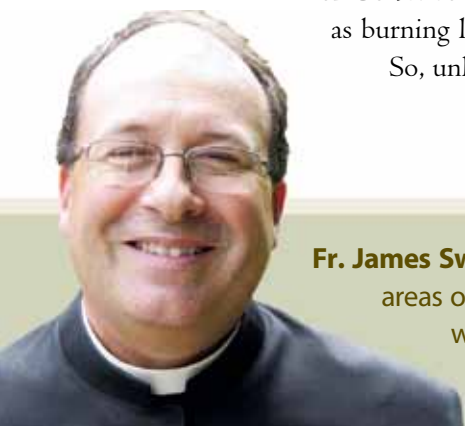
St. Thérèse of Lisieux (The Little Flower)

Since it is necessary to be free of sin and even attachments to sin in order to enter Heaven, many Catholics believe they will go to Purgatory; as if that 'consolation prize' is good enough. Instead of aiming to go to Heaven, they aim to go to Purgatory. Unfortunately, for those suffering the agony of desire for God in Purgatory, it will not feel like it is 'good enough.'

St. Thérèse of Lisieux teaches us to aim for Heaven. She says that if we do three things, God will help us avoid Purgatory:

- Keep trying (*"Try to please God in everything"*)
- Keep trusting God (*"Have an unshakeable trust"*)
- Humility. Recognizing our weakness. Be convinced that Heaven isn't something we earn, but something that we reach in spite of our uselessness. In the end, it is something we can only reach with God's help.

This last one is especially difficult. However, if, aware of our weakness, we ask God frequently and humbly for help, he will help us. His loving attention is attracted to humble souls. As we begin this New Year, we should look for new ways to practice humility in the hope of avoiding Purgatory altogether.



**Fr. James Swanson, LC** was ordained a priest in 1994. Since then he has worked in the French-speaking areas of Canada with young people and in our seminary there as a professor. He also spent 12 years working at our retreat center in Washington DC as a retreat master and spiritual director. Since 2013, he fulfills that same role in Atlanta.

# DIVINE MERCY UNIVERSITY

## *A New Name and a New Program*

Eighteen years ago, a unique institute was founded by a group of mental health professionals, clinicians, and academicians to join the theoretical and empirical knowledge of psychology with the Catholic understanding of the human person. Founded as The Institute for the Psychological Sciences, the institution expanded to Divine Mercy University (DMU) in 2016, reflecting the addition of a school and program offerings. Helping to guide this enterprise for past decade is Legionary priest, Fr. Charles Sikorsky, the university's president.

DMU offers master's and doctoral degrees in Psychology and Counseling. Beginning in 2014, the Master's in Psychology is an online degree program, giving working professionals around the world practical tools to become transformational leaders in their workplace or ministry. In 2016, the School of Counseling began with an online Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. The doctoral Psy.D. program is the institution's longest program, achieving APA-Accreditation in 2016.

With the scientifically rich curriculum and research grounded in the Church's theological and philosophical wisdom regarding the person, Divine Mercy University is positioned to make an impact on the culture unlike any other institution.

"The mental health needs of our country are growing, and we need to be able to respond in a way that understands the whole person – body, mind and spirit – in all of his or her dignity," said President Fr. Charles Sikorsky, L.C.

This past year, the University opened the Center for Trauma and Resiliency Studies (CTRS) focused on providing training and education in the areas of trauma, including human trafficking, domestic violence, terrorism, refugee



Dr. Benjamin Keyes with DMU students in Beirut, Lebanon

displacement, and chronic poverty. Through the trainings, which are available to all professionals, there are four separate levels of Trauma Certification: Compassion Fatigue Educator, Compassion Fatigue Therapist, Field Traumologist, and Certified (Clinical) Traumologist. Certification workshops are offered both onsite at the university's Arlington, Virginia campus, or online through a virtual classroom.

In October, Dr. Benjamin Keyes, Director of CTRS, traveled to Beirut, Lebanon with a group from the university. Their goal was to provide trauma training for outreach workers, clinicians, and others working with people affected by the violence in Aleppo, Syria. "It was a blessing to experience how counseling skills allow us to enter the sacred space of another person's life to help them heal even when their loss and tragedy is far beyond anything I can comprehend," said Marion Moreland, a M.S. in Counseling student. "This trip has made me want to learn more so I can do more."

The mission of Divine Mercy University is to provide students an effective academic and educational environment, where the students are supported in integrating the psychological sciences and a Catholic-Christian understanding of the person. To learn more about the work and programs of the university, visit their website: [www.divinemercy.edu](http://www.divinemercy.edu)



## OUR DAY IN SONG

From their first prayers early in the morning to the final hour of the day, the seminarians at the Legionary's Novitiate express through music their joy of belonging to the Lord. In the spirit of Christian worship, they approach God in different forms of devotion: praise, petition, adoration, thanksgiving, and surrender.



Therefore, it was natural to assemble this beautiful music in a new CD: *Our Day in Song*. Fr. Andreas Kramarz, LC, dean of studies and music director, brought the choir of 20 seminarians to a recording studio in Waterford, CT, to produce this CD with 25 songs drawn from their daily life.

Pieces include the *Veni Creator*, with which the brothers begin their morning prayer, songs sung at Mass, during exposition of the Eucharist, midday prayers, Rosary songs, and the *Salve Regina* from Night Prayers.

"It was a very beautiful experience to know that we were recording music that would touch people's souls," said Br. Jordan, one of the choir members, whose favorite song on the CD is the *Ave Maria* with 7 parts that elevate the angelic words with a beautiful sound.

"People listening to the CD are invited to participate in our life and in the joy which comes from our singing to God," said Fr. Andreas. The CD is available by calling (203) 272-1621, or online at [www.LCCCheshire.org](http://www.LCCCheshire.org) where you can listen to a sample from the album. Two previous CDs, *Bread of Angels: Hymns to Christ in the Eucharist* and *Gaudete: Advent and Christmas*, are also available.

## A QUIET PLACE

*A new book by Fr. John Bartunek*

If you desire a deeper connection with God or have the slightest suspicion that something is missing in your spiritual life, then now is the time to enrich and strengthen your faith with *A Quiet Place*. Whether you pray often or don't know where to start, Fr. John Bartunek will help you develop a daily habit of prayer. Get ready to encounter God in a more profound way than ever before – and see for yourself how prayer can change your life forever.



ORDER  
YOUR COPY  
TODAY!

Available in paperback  
or e-book from Amazon.

## Schedule of Events

### Atlanta Area

#### **Retreats, marriage prep and enrichment.**

See website (events or services) for dates and information.

[www.rcatlanta.org](http://www.rcatlanta.org) | 770-837-2798

### Bethesda, Maryland – Retreat Center

#### **Retreats, marriage prep and enrichment.**

See website for dates and information.

[www.ourladyofbethesda.org](http://www.ourladyofbethesda.org)  
301-365-0612

### Connecticut Area

#### **Legion of Christ Novitiate & College of Humanities**

See events [www.LCCCheshire.org](http://www.LCCCheshire.org) | 203-271-0805

### Dallas Area

#### **Retreats, marriage prep and enrichment.**

See website (events) for dates and information.

[www.dfw-rc.org](http://www.dfw-rc.org)

### Greater Charlotte Area

#### **Retreats, spiritual exercises and enrichment.**

See web site (retreats or events) for dates and information.

[www.rcgreatercharlotte.com](http://www.rcgreatercharlotte.com)

### Greater Ohio Valley Area

#### **Retreats, spiritual exercises and enrichment.**

See web site (events) for dates and information.

[www.rcohiovalley.org](http://www.rcohiovalley.org)

### Houston Area

#### **Retreats, spiritual exercises and enrichment.**

See website (resources) for dates and information.

[www.thykingdomcome.us](http://www.thykingdomcome.us)

### New York/New Jersey/Connecticut Area

#### **Retreats, marriage prep and enrichment**

See website (events) for dates and information.

[www.regnumchristinyctnj.org](http://www.regnumchristinyctnj.org)

914-244-3685 | [info@RegnumChristinyctnj.org](mailto:info@RegnumChristinyctnj.org)

### Missions

#### **On Line Spiritual Resources/Retreat Guides**

[www.rcspirituality.org](http://www.rcspirituality.org)

Study Circle Guides, Ask a Priest- Questions  
[contact@rcspirituality.org](mailto:contact@rcspirituality.org)

#### **Mission Youth Missions – International Missions**

See website for dates:

[www.missionyouth.com](http://www.missionyouth.com) | 855-556-6872

[missionyouth@missionnetwork.com](mailto:missionyouth@missionnetwork.com)

#### **Helping Hands Medical Missions**

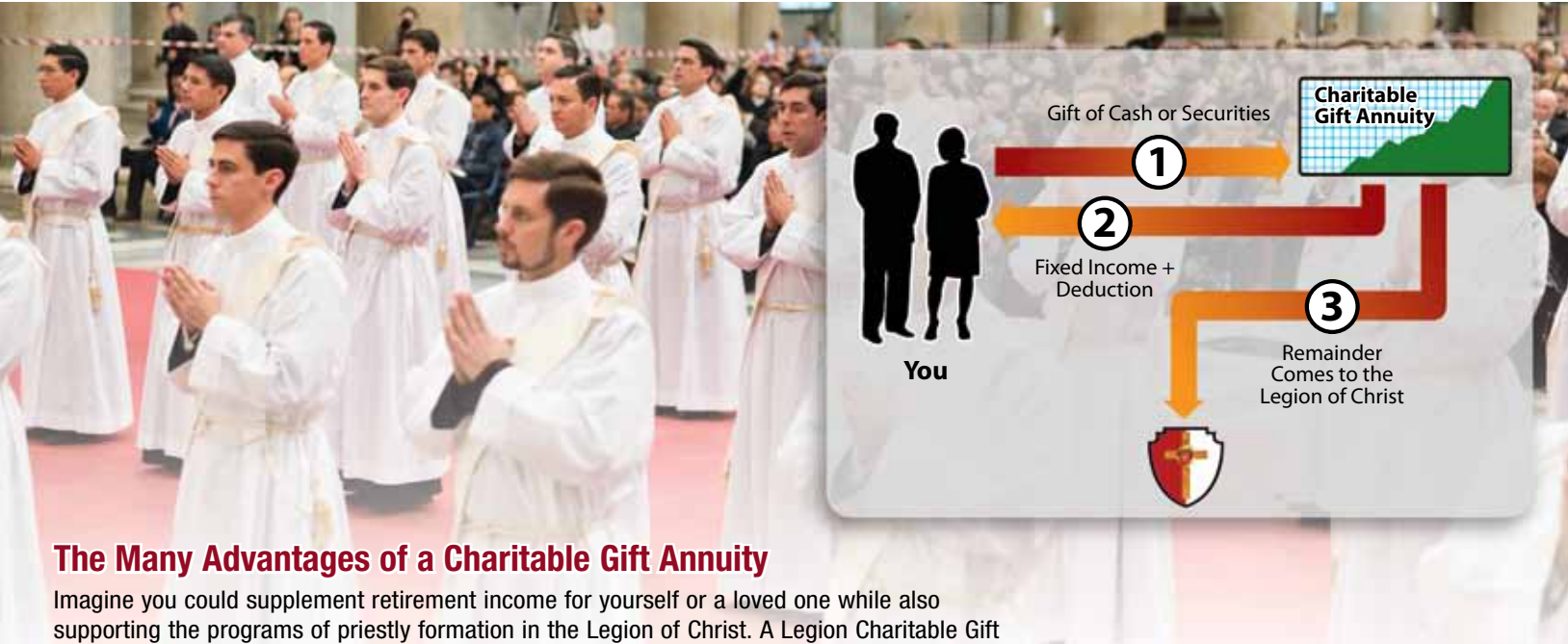
See website (join) for dates: [www.hhmm.org](http://www.hhmm.org)

972-253-1800 | [mission@hhmm.org](mailto:mission@hhmm.org)

# THANK YOU FOR OUR 33 NEW PRIESTS!

*This great blessing is due, in no small measure, to your support of the seminarians in their years of formation.*

One way of continuing to provide for future generations of priests is a charitable gift annuity. At the same time, it can help secure your financial future. Here is how it works...



## The Many Advantages of a Charitable Gift Annuity

Imagine you could supplement retirement income for yourself or a loved one while also supporting the programs of priestly formation in the Legion of Christ. A Legion Charitable Gift Annuity could be just what you're looking for.

**How It Works:** A Charitable Gift Annuity lets you convert cash or appreciated assets, like stocks or mutual funds, into a payment stream for your loved ones without triggering capital gain taxes when the asset is sold. It also provides a current income tax deduction and removes assets from your estate. It is a great way to achieve your philanthropic goals and partner in the Legion's future.

**To Learn More:** Return the short reply form below to receive a no-obligation proposal showing what a CGA would do specifically for you, for your spouse, or a loved one.

### Example Rate Chart:

Age	Rate	Age	Rate
66	4.8%	80	6.8%
70	5.1%	85	7.8%
75	5.8%	90+	9.0%

Rates as of January 1, 2018

*Through the Legion of Christ, you can establish a Charitable Gift Annuity for yourself or a loved one that will pay a fixed income stream for life. And it has the added benefit of supporting future seminarians and priests at the same time. **Return the short reply form below** to receive a no-obligation proposal showing what a CGA would do specifically for you, for your spouse, or a loved one.*

**Request for More Information**

*Plan today... Change the future!*

Please send me a FREE, no-obligation proposal which outlines the many benefits of a Charitable Gift Annuity.

- ✓ My date of birth (or the date of birth of the person I want to receive a lifetime income): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
  - ✓ Date of birth of a second person who would continue receiving income (if I so desire): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
  - ✓ Amount I am considering as a Charitable Gift Annuity: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (if you are not sure, we will base our proposal on a hypothetical amount of \$10,000)
- Funding in Cash       Funding by Stock Transfer

NAME (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_



## REGNUM CHRISTI LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST

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[www.regnumchristi.org](http://www.regnumchristi.org)  
[www.legionariesofchrist.org](http://www.legionariesofchrist.org)

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(800) 532-7478

[Andy.Bamber@legionofchrist.org](mailto:Andy.Bamber@legionofchrist.org)

### GIFTS IN KIND

*Phil Liquori*

(203) 530-8778

[Phil.Liquori@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Phil.Liquori@sbcglobal.net)

### Who We Are

The Legionaries of Christ, the consecrated men and women and all Regnum Christi members are a spiritual family who love Jesus Christ and, therefore, what He loves: His Church and souls. We commit to live out our baptismal call to holiness and to engage in apostolic action.

### What We Do

Committed to establishing the Kingdom of Christ in every person and in society, we seek to evangelize culture, building a civilization of justice and love.

We form apostles by bringing God's love to them, inspiring them to fall in love with Jesus Christ especially through prayer and the sacramental life, helping them come to know better the truths of the Catholic faith and inviting them to participate actively in the evangelization of culture and society. We awaken people to their mission in life and in the Church. We seek to serve all people and the whole Church, working as Jesus Christ did who formed a group of apostles and then sent them out to the whole world.

*Our masthead:* Br. Erik Burkel, LC, now doing his internship in Cheshire, and Br. Jose Rangel, LC, in his first year of humanities.

## Missionaries in Action | Serving Those Less Fortunate

### GOD WANTS TO USE YOU

Fr. Juan Guerra, LC, was assigned to move to Houston before anyone knew that Hurricane Harvey would get there before him. When he arrived six days after the initial catastrophe, he immediately looked for ways to help. He visited shelters hoping to identify families not being helped by insurance or FEMA. There was no shortage of people who did not qualify for the official assistance programs.

One family he met – Marcos Sarmiento, his common-law wife Myra, and son Byron – were devastated by the disaster. They had no legal papers to qualify for help and all their possessions, including their car, had been destroyed. Fr. Juan wanted to help, but when he returned to the shelter on the following day, Marcos, Myra, and Byron were no longer there. With the help of the Red Cross, Fr. Juan found them staying with a friend in his mobile home.

People were generous in donating furniture and groceries – and Fr. Juan was even able to find a bicycle for Byron. When Fr. Juan requested financial help through social media, his network of friends began sending donations, including \$1,300 for the down payment on a used car. One of Fr. Juan's contacts sent a



Fr. Juan Guerra, LC with Marcos, Myra, and Byron at Mass.

computer which Byron needed for school.

Marcos and Myra have since found jobs to help them move forward. Fr. Juan has joined the family for dinner on several occasions and they have attended Mass together. Remarkable on his experiences, Fr. Juan says, "It's amazing how many people want to help ... I like to remind people that God wants to use you and there are always opportunities to be his instrument in helping others."

"Missionaries in Action" features inspirational people who give of themselves to build the Kingdom of God. For more stories and information about living an active faith, see our website at [www.legionariesofchrist.org](http://www.legionariesofchrist.org)