On Sunday, April 3, at the 12:00 noon Mass at St. Jean Baptiste Church in New York City, two members of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, Brothers Thomas Mella and Michael O’Leary, marked the 40th anniversary of their religious profession. Father Provincial Norman Pelletier presided at the Mass of celebration while the choir of St. Jean Baptiste and the assembly were led in music by the parish cantor, Lisa Biewala. Parishioners from St. Jean Baptiste and St. Andrew’s Church were present along with family members and friends of Brs. Thomas and Michael.

Br. Michael O’Leary was born and raised in Yorkville. He attended Saint Jean Baptiste Elementary School and was a choir boy at St. Jean’s before entering Blessed Sacrament High School Seminary in Waupaca, W1, and Eymard College in Hyde Park, NY. Following novitiate, he made first profession of vows on March 19, 1965. He then completed undergraduate studies at Marist College, Poughkeepsie.

Michael has served the Congregation in education, health care, finance, maintenance, and as an
I write this column in the interregnum, that is, in the middle of the nine days of mourning after the death of Pope John Paul II and the election of a successor. No one can doubt the impact he has had on our world. There simply is no other person, whether head of state, or director of a multinational corporation, or leader of a religious faith, that possessed such a global status capable of getting the media and the world to pause and reflect on how he managed to capture the imagination and hearts of millions and the attention of the worldly powerful; all of this accomplished without a military, missiles, or money. His legacy has yet to be fully revealed, but his greatness has already been felt and his holiness popularly proclaimed.

We give thanks to God for what He has accomplished through John Paul II and his papal ministry. The Pope was not flawless and in that fact we take comfort and renew our faith in a God who uses the weak to confound the strong. With the assurance of the guidance of the Spirit of God in our lives, our world, and our Church, we now have to move on.

Shortly, the Cardinals in Conclave will select a new Pope. Who would even aspire to follow in the shadow of John Paul II? Those are not just ordinary shoes that have to be filled—they are the shoes of the fisherman. We must believe that the Spirit will choose rightly. By the time you read these words the Church will surely have a new Pope. My prayer is that this successor of Peter be a man of dialogue and communion, possessing the wisdom of our Catholic Tradition and the courage to address the difficult problems facing the Church as she enters into the third millennium.

Some members of our small religious Congregation will also soon gather for a meeting (not quite a conclave) in Lyons, France, to select the leadership for the entire Congregation and to lay out a program for the next six years. Unlike the Cardinals in Conclave, we will elect a Superior General for a term of six years, not for life like the term of the Pope. At this meeting will be all the leaders of the Congregation’s Provinces or Regions from around the world. They will gather from Europe, North and South America, Africa, Asia and Australia. The meeting will last three weeks and we will struggle with our own situation in religious life and see how we can better articulate our mission and then develop plans for effective implementation of those ideals. In a sense, our meeting in Lyons is a bit of a microcosm of the entire Church because we will be facing, though on a smaller scale, the same cultural, social, and religious concerns that the whole Church is also having to struggle with.

These are times of great expectations and great challenges—together let us pray for the Spirit’s sure and stable guidance. It was the Spirit that brought us to the present moment and we firmly believe that the Spirit will continue to lead the Church and our religious Congregation to respond graciously and generously to the hungers of our Church and world. As always, we invoke our Founder, Saint Peter Julian Eymard, to sustain us on our journey in faith and trust in a loving God. ✝

Norman B. Pelletier, S.S.S.
Provincial Superior
active firefighter and EMT for 30 years. Following retirement from the fire service, he made a three-month sabbatical in the Holy Land before being assigned to Saint Jean Baptiste in April 2004. He has two sisters, Mary Brown of Maitland, FL, and Helen Hardes of College Point, NY.

Br. Thomas Mella is a native of Brooklyn, where many members of his family continue to reside. He completed novitiate in Barre, MA, and professed first vows, also on March 19, 1965. Over the years, he has worked generously as a sacristan and Pastoral Associate at churches in Chicago, IL; Albuquerque, NM; and now at St. Andrew’s in Lower Manhattan.

Thomas loves the opera, and can often be heard leading the singing at daily Masses and other services at St. Andrew’s. He is generous both in meeting the needs of the church and of his fellow religious. His sisters and other family members were present for this special celebration.

In his homily, Fr. Norman spoke about Br. Thomas’s and Br. Michael’s dedication and service to the Church and the Congregation—and especially their faithfulness to the Liturgy of the Eucharist and Adoration. He pointed out that the first reading from the Liturgy of the Word, Acts 2:42-47, presents the marks of the primitive church’s fidelity to apostolic preaching, communal life, and the breaking of the bread. These are the marks of a religious of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, expressed in the lives and ministries of Brs. Thomas and Michael.

This homily was followed by Brs. Thomas and Michael renewing their vows. The words of the Presentation Motet, *My Spirit Sang All Day* by Gerald Finizi, beautifully fit the occasion: “My spirit sang all day, O my joy, nothing my tongue could say, only my joy!—- What is thy joy? And I replied, O see, O my joy, ’tis Thee: Thou art my joy.”

In addition to the priests from St. Jean Baptiste, other con-celebrants included Frs. John Kamas, Anthony (who assists at St. Andrew), Michael from the Philippines, Brian McWeeney a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, and a friend of Br. Michael.

Following the Mass, a parish reception was held in the Great Hall for all present. After this joyful parish reception, family, friends, and members of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament and the Congregation of Notre Dame communities were invited to preprandials and a luncheon. Fr. James Hayes was able to join in for the afternoon of feasting after his duties at St. Andrews’ were completed. Between the luncheon and the dessert, many stories, memories, and laughs were shared by all present. ♦

MISSION STATEMENT
Province of Saint Ann

“Following in the footsteps of St. Peter Julian Eymard, our mission is to respond to the hungers of the human family with the riches of God’s love manifested in the Eucharist.” (*Rule of Life* 3).

Conscious of our call to bear prophetic witness to the Eucharist, we commit ourselves to the renewal of Church and society through this sacrament, especially by:

- creating assemblies and communities characterized by hospitality, reconciliation, and service, leading to communion (*koinonia*) in Christ;
- fostering liturgical renewal in our parishes and communities, and celebrating the Eucharist as the source and summit of the life of the Church, with full, conscious and active participation;
- associating others with our prayer and offering them appropriate catechesis, and giving personal witness to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist;
- sharing our Eucharistic mission with others, from sincere welcome to full collaboration;
- showing compassion for the suffering and marginalized. ♦
This was the theme of the National Catholic Student Coalition’s (NCSC) 21st Annual Leadership Conference which I attended in Washington, DC, from December 29th thru January 4th, and was the second of a three year sequence of Ask Me Why . . . Last year’s theme in Orlando, Florida, was Ask Me Why I’m Catholic and next year’s theme [in Chicago] will be Ask Me Why I Share My Faith.

The National Catholic Student Coalition strives to embody the Catholic identity for students from Newman Centers and campus ministries at institutions of higher education in the United States, and brings together students from across the country to learn, not from college professors, but from each other, and not about academics, but about themselves.

The point of the conference was to bring together a group of Catholic students who are at different points in their faith journey so that they can help each other grow in faith and community, and nurture leadership for the next generation of the Catholic Church. The conference acts as a resource by providing forums for discussion, both formally and informally, and gives students opportunities to hear about various issues faced by Catholic students. It also is a time to interact with students, campus ministers, and vocation directors who provide information on vocations (the reason why I attended). There were about two dozen religious or service organizations represented.

The conference also provides a forum for NCSC to establish its voice through the resolutions and position papers that reflect their voice on social and moral issues. Some past resolutions and positions have been: (1986) they supported a study-action project to work to support the Filipino people’s struggle; supporting the rights of refugees; a position paper in 1987 on the Consistent Life Ethic; and a resolution was passed last year in commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council.

Finally, the conference is an invaluable service because it energizes students and renews their faith, their sense of community, and their Catholic beliefs.

We heard Kevin Ahearn from the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) give an overview of other national and regional movements of IMCS, which are similar to NCSC. Egbom Francis, IMCS Africa, spoke to us about the realities of his homeland and enlightened us with his experiences as an international student. Carolyn Shierk gave us an overview on the United Nations Study Session which will take place March 17-19, 2005 in NYC. Ross Gruebal, International Relations & Communications Chair, gave a brief report on the NCSC’s participation at the International Coordination Meeting (ICM), the International Youth Forum (IYF), their relationship with IMCS, and the future goals of NCSC’s international involvement. Their goal is to remain connected with IMCS (after all, NCSC is the US affiliate of IMCS) by promoting the education of international/global issues and coordinating inter-regional/national programming, such as Pennies for Peace, United Nations Study Session, ICM, IYF, World Youth Day, and other projects.

What an inspirational experience—to witness college students who are in love with God and who are engaged in living out their Catholic faith. The faith of these students is maturing and they are living the Gospel in the modern world while gathering around the Eucharistic table. These students strive to promote from within and among the

ASK ME WHY I SERVE THE CHURCH
by Tom Smithson, SSS

Continued on next page
students and ministries they serve on their campuses.

Available at the end of each conference is a three day post-conference retreat for those students and campus ministers who wish to remain, providing an opportunity to reflect on their lives and their service to the church through the process of discernment. These students are trying to discover where God is calling and leading them. After the five day conference, one student was still pondering “What on earth am I doing here? What do I have to discern in my life? I knew in my heart God had me here for a reason, so I decided to keep an open heart and just let the Spirit guide me.”

I heard students express that they are not yet ready to commit to a celibate lifestyle at this point in their lives. One of the students said: “While I did not come away with answers, my questions were clarified. Instead of questioning whether I am called toward married/family life versus religious life, I am now questioning how I can find fulfillment in regards to intimacy and companionship within the bounds of a celibate lifestyle.”

I came away from this conference with an insight and hope that there are vocations out there. Young people are serving in the church and are looking for ways to continue to serve. I am wondering [out loud] if we should be casting our nets into this pond and exploring ways of having contact with Newman centers and beginning to celebrate Mass with the Newman Club at Case Western Reserve University and making some inquiries at John Carroll University. ✪

Please pray for our deceased religious . . .

MAY
07 1986 Rev. Henry Foley
07 2004 Br. Ignatius Montgomery
09 1944 Br. Claude-Hudon Beaulieu
13 1985 Rev. Ralph Lavigne
15 1996 Rev. Jose Barandiaren
23 1975 Rev. Peter Goulet
25 1912 Br. Leonardus Routhier
25 1975 Br. Anthony Nolan
26 1974 Rev. Normand Audette
29 1994 Br. James Lent

JUNE
02 2004 Rev. Normand Falardeau
03 1999 Br. Thomas Morrissey
07 1933 Rev. Calixtus LeBlanc
07 1984 Rev. Joseph Nearon
13 1968 Rev. Omer Goulet
23 1991 Rev. Rosario Morin
24 1979 Br. Ovid (Alexius) Poirier

JULY
01 1980 Br. Joseph Lamontagne
03 1922 Br. Armandus Mathieu
04 1988 Rev. Alfred Trudeau
11 1940 Br. Henricus Gatien
13 1967 Rev. Omer Hebert
13 1981 Br. Richard Leclerc
16 1983 Rev. Jules Simencou
18 1984 Rev. Lionel Dorais
19 1914 Br. Theodorus Bellavance
20 1964 Rev. Daniel Sullivan
22 1993 Br. Paul Omer Gaudreau
23 2000 Rev. Donald Brouillard
26 1978 Br. Maxime Béliveau
28 1914 Br. Patricius Murphy
This statement was made by Bishop Donald Pelotte, SSS, Diocese of Gallup, New Mexico, in response to uranium mining proposed for New Mexico and Arizona.

Water and life are inseparable. In the beautiful yet fragile environment of New Mexico, we have continual reminders that without water, life is not possible. Whenever life-sustaining water reserves are threatened by drought, contamination or wasteful use, we are challenged anew to deepen our appreciation of water as God’s sacred gift and to exercise responsible stewardship in defending, preserving and conserving vital water resources. We are all interconnected and called to reverence the scarce and sacred gift of water.

The sacredness of water is conveyed in the Scriptures and our Catholic tradition. Creation of the universe is the first grace, the first revelation of God’s love and goodness. Human beings, created in the image and likeness of God, are part of this love-imbed creation. This is evident at the dawn of creation, as described in Genesis: “God said, ‘Let the water under the sky be gathered into a single basin, so that the dry land may appear.’ . . . God called the dry land ‘the earth’ and the basin of the water God called ‘the sea.’ God saw how good it was” (Gn. 1:9-10). In the baptism of Jesus, water is the element used to symbolize spiritual cleansing and a sign of God’s grace conferred upon God’s anointed One. “After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him” (Mt. 3:16). The Bible, the sacraments and Catholic tradition clearly communicate the sacred nature and benefits of water; how water nourishes our bodies and souls and is both literally and symbolically the giver of life.

In the 1998 pastoral statement of the Roman Catholic bishops of New Mexico “Partnership for the Future,” particular issues contributing to the environmental crisis in New Mexico were identified and recognized as deeply moral and ethical challenges for all people of faith. There is now an imminent threat to the people, lands and aquifers in Church Rock and Crownpoint that necessitates a statement from me, as bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Gallup in New Mexico and Arizona, in order to voice clear opposition to the in situ leach uranium mining projects proposed by Hydro Resources Inc., of Lewisville, Texas. Numerous scientific and medical experts warn that the invasive technology to be used would invade and irreversibly contaminate the water resources in the aquifers as well as the soil and air of this bioregion upon which over 50,000 people and local communities are completely dependent. There is no evidence that uranium-desecrated water can ever be restored to safe levels for drinking or use. Such contamination and destruction of vital water resources by outside corporations intent on maximizing profits at the expense of the health and well-being of human populations, animals, native plants and land are clearly deeply moral, ethical and social justice issues that concern us all.

As stated in “Partnership for the Future,” we invite public policymakers and public officials to focus directly on environmental issues while seeking the common good of their communities, which by necessity includes the good of our planetary home. We call on them to eradicate actions and policies which perpetuate various forms of environmental racism and to work for an economy which focuses more on equitable sustainability rather than unbridled consumption of natural resources, maximization of corporate profits and acquisition of goods.

BISHOP PELOTTE OPPOSES URANIUM MINING PROPOSED FOR THE SOUTHWEST
Catholic social justice teachings offer a clear guide for understanding the moral and ethical dimensions of the environmental challenges facing us in New Mexico, particularly in respect to water:

—A God-centered and sacramental view of the universe which grounds human accountability for the fate of the earth.

—A consistent respect for human life which extends to respect for all creation.

—A worldview affirming the ethical significance of global interdependence and the common good.

—An ethics of solidarity promoting cooperation and a just structure of sharing in the world community.

—An understanding of the universal purpose of created things which requires equitable use of the earth’s resources.

—An option for the poor which gives passion to the quest for an equitable and sustainable world.


With this sacred view of earth and all creation, we continue to live out our covenant relationship with our Creator by being responsible stewards and caring brothers and sisters in God’s family. †
We share this letter with you to give you an understanding of the difficult conditions resulting from the December 2004 tsunami and the challenging rebuilding efforts being experienced by the Sri Lankans.

I take this opportunity to thank you very sincerely on behalf of my people for the tsunami assistance rendered by the Province of St. Anne totaling US $6,000. I thank you for your generosity and beg you to convey my thanks to the provincial leadership team as well.

You will be pleased to note that with these funds, we have already transported 24,000 kilos of dry rations to the tsunami-affected areas in the south and in the east of Sri Lanka. (I launched the tsunami relief work from the east as a symbolic gesture since the majority there are Tamil-speaking Sri Lankans who are fighting for a separate state.)

I was accompanied on this trip by Rev. Fr. Ignatius, SSS, a native from the eastern shores of Sri Lanka. At the request of the Bishop of Batticaloa (eastern Sri Lanka) we decided to transport the relief to a place called Kalmunai. On arrival around 5:30 pm we found that the causeway had been washed away and so had to travel through LTTE (Tamil Tiger Rebel) held territory which is commonly referred to as ‘uncleared areas.’ We reached our destination after nightfall and when we set off it was after 7:30 pm.

Uncleared areas have no electricity. The havoc wrought upon the population remains unattended. We had to drive across jungle terrain. I was leading the way in a 32-year-old car. The lorry (camion or trailer truck) was following. Then a thunderstorm hit us. In fact, cyclonic weather had been predicted but we had already loaded the trailer truck and a delay would have cost us dearly. So, I chanced the weather. I do have fog lights, but they were useless in that kind of weather. It was after 9:30 pm when we finally got back on government controlled territory. Alas, the weather conditions had deteriorated further, and I had the misfortune of ramming a security forces barricade. Since this is peacetime, we were lucky to get away with a few smiles all around. In wartime, we would have been shot as we would have been mistaken for suicide car bombers.

Our next project, which is in progress, is the construction of a house in the east. Only the floor remains [after the tsunami struck]. We have also placed an order for 20 canoes which will be transported to the east, and a further 12 power boats which will be taken to the south to help fisherman who have lost their boats (which provide for their livelihood). After Easter, I will transport 12 second-hand computers and 12 sewing machines to help those who had been engaged in such work to recommence their businesses.

Many computer technicians and systems analysts who had their own private businesses had not [been] insured against a tsunami and are left in the lurch. So also are housewives who engage in a cottage industry as seamstresses.

I thank you very sincerely for coming to our aid in this time of need. Our prayers are with you. ♦

The Church was born of the paschal mystery. For this very reason the Eucharist, which is in an outstanding way the sacrament of the paschal mystery, stands at the centre of the Church’s life.”

Pope John Paul II from his Encyclical Letter, Ecclesia de Eucharistia

The Year of the Eucharist
Prayer Requests . . .

For the repose of the soul of Paul E. Pinard, uncle of Fr. Norman Pelletier, SSS, who passed away on Sunday, April 17. May he rest in peace.

For our new Pope, that he be guided by God’s Spirit in his new role.

For Pope John Paul II, that he rest in peace.

All Benefactors of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, that God will bless them for their kindness and generosity.

For the Success of the General Chapter, that the Spirit of God would inspire and guide those religious present at this meeting.

All Religious, especially those who are ill and suffering, that God would bring healing and strength to them.

All of the Victims of the Tsunami, who continue in their suffering and loss, that God would comfort them.

The Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament has printed beautiful posters, measuring 10” x 26” or 15” x 36” commemorating the ‘Year of the Eucharist’.

To request your poster, please contact the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament at:

440-442-6311

or in writing:
5384 Wilson Mills Road,
Highland Heights, OH 44143

SSS Posters Commemorate ‘Year of the Eucharist’
We introduce you to a Blessed Sacrament Father whose cause for canonization is proceeding through the steps leading to his declaration, first as “Blessed” and then as “Saint”. In this brief article we introduce you to the man, and we encourage you to pray that through his intercession the necessary “miracles” needed for his beatification and sainthood might occur.

The Servant of God, Fr. Lodovico Longari, was born in Montodine (Cremona), Italy in 1889. His profoundly Christian parents, Antonio and Laura, had eleven children, three of whom became priests.

He entered the seminary of his diocese, Crema, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1912.

Attracted by the spirituality of the Apostle of the Eucharist, Saint Peter Julian Eymard, he entered the novitiate of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

From 1915-1918 he served as a Private attached to the Medical Corps at the front line. Priest, soldier, adorer! Often he would transform his lowly tent into a sanctuary of prayer and eucharistic adoration. His fellow soldiers were drawn to him by his example of goodness and heroic charity.

With his religious Profession in 1920 he began the mission which characterized him, an educator of the young men who were called to the religious life. He formed in them an enthusiasm for the eucharistic vocation.

He was called to the government of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, first as Provincial Superior, then as Superior General for twelve years.

A devoted son of the Church, he became a personal friend of Pope Pius XII whom he periodically consulted.

He died on June 17, 1963, not long after the death of the revered Pope John XXIII. His message: let Jesus in the Eucharist become the source and center of our Christian life.

The Province of Saint Ann Newsletter is now available on our website: <www.blessedsacrament.com> in PDF format, and may be reproduced. Past issues are also available.
REMEMBERING FATHER LONGARI
by Fr. Carlo Vassalli, SSS, San Claudio (Rome)

The following excerpts are from an article taken from the Newsletter of the Italian Province (Notiziario 12 – January-February 2005) and brings us up to date on the efforts to move toward the Canonization of Father Lodovico Longari, SSS. Some materials are available in English through the Provincialate. We thank Mario Marzocchi for his translation from the Italian text.

The important work of the Postulator of the Cause for Fr. Longari is well advanced; at present, all of the material is ready for printing. There are about two thousand pages to be compiled into two volumes. When will the process be complete? We are at critical junctions, that is, we risk being stopped for years at a dead end, as long as there is no decisive proof of a miracle, which would place the process on its course again.

Since there is a need for miraculous proof, we should recall the memory and figure of this Servant of God and request his intercession in obtaining a true miracle. There are some that are suffering from illness in our own communities; they would be happy to assist in this endeavor. I sense that our diverse communities, at Morning and Evening Prayer, would gladly insert an intercession for our sick. Those that are ill would be thankful for the prayers and it would nourish our own family communion as religious.

I appeal to the good will of all, and especially to those who think it is more useful to take the initiative themselves to make Fr. Lodovico (and Br. Giovanni Nadiani, SSS) known; to pray each day with the faithful, at Mass, and at Morning and Evening Prayer.

What can you do to help? Use your imagination and do everything and anything you can think of which might help to spread devotion to Fr. Longari.

If you are interested in obtaining more information about Fr. Longari, please write to:

The Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament
5384 Wilson Mills Road
Highland Heights, OH 44143

Prayer to Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament

Blessed are you, Mary, exalted daughter of Sion! You are highly favored and full of grace, for the spirit of God descended upon you.

We magnify the Lord and rejoice with you for the gift of the Word made flesh, bread of life and cup of joy.

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, our model of prayer in the Cenacle, pray for us that we may become what we receive, the body of Christ your Son. Amen.
Responding to the hungers of the human family with the riches of God’s love manifested in the Eucharist through:

Parish Ministry
Emmanuel Magazine
Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing

Workshops:
• LITE (Life in the Eucharist)
• Eucharistic Celebrations, Contemplation & Communion

ANNIVERSARIES

... OF ORDINATION

MAY
05  1990  Rev. Frederico Ablog
16  1964  Rev. Eugene LaVerdiere
17  1969  V. Rev. Norman Pelletier
23  1964  Rev. Paul Bernier
23  1964  Rev. William Young
28  1966  Rev. Robert Chabot
31  1975  Rev. John Kamas

JUNE
04  1966  Rev. Bernard Camiré
20  1992  Rev. John Thomas Lane
23  1984  Rev. Mario Marzocchi
29  1975  Rev. Ralph Roberts

JULY
13  1958  Rev. Robert Pittman

... OF PROFESSION

MAY
08  1970  Rev. Anthony Schueller

JUNE
06  1970  Rev. James Hayes
29  1951  Br. Edmund Hardy

JULY
20  1957  Deacon Joseph Bourgeois