

November 2021

## Council Corner # 17



# Society of the Divine Word Southern Province of St. Augustine

## Abuses in the Church: Looking Forward

*Webinar from the Generalate—Please Register by Thursday 4th*

In his book: *Why I Am still Catholic*, Brandon Vogt says he can't avoid the elephant in the room, the most obvious reason not to be Catholic: the sexual abuse crisis. In response as a Millennial Catholic, young husband and father, he remains a Catholic despite these horrific cases of abuse and cover-up.

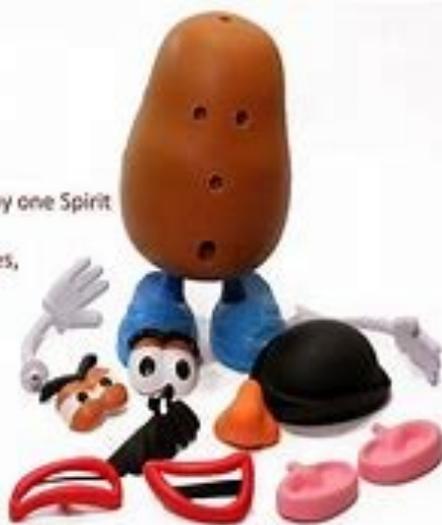
1). The main reason he's still Catholic is because of Jesus, he says, not because of the leaders of the Church. 2). His other reason is that he knows that the sexual abuse crisis is not indicative of the entire Church.

One reason there's so much outrage over sexually abusive priests is because most people know, intuitively, that priests are supposed to be moral exemplars. He's convinced most still are, and it's a reason he remains close to them.



Just as a body,  
though one,  
has many parts,  
but all its many parts  
form one body,  
so it is with Christ.  
For we were all baptized by one Spirit  
so as to form one body  
—whether Jews or Gentiles,  
slave or free  
—and we were all given  
the one Spirit to drink.  
Even so the body is not  
made up of one part  
but of many.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14



3). His third argument he remains Catholic is because he wants to be part of the solution. The Church is not just an institution but also a family, and when your family faces a crisis, you don't flee—you stay and help.

For Catholics he states, the Church is our family and home; and when evil threatens your family or home, you don't give up and run away. You batten down the hatches. You plant your feet.

*“This is my home, and I will not let evil destroy it.”*

## Webinar from the Generalate Contd.

So, “scandals don’t push me away from the Church”, he says; just as a relative’s cancer diagnosis doesn’t push one away from her.



In both cases, the evil demands a heroic resolve to stay and fight, to be part of the solution, especially on behalf of the victims.

*“I want to be very clear: these sexual abuse cases are horrific” he states. “I’m Catholic not because Church leaders are perfect, but because the Church channels to me the love and forgiveness of Jesus in unparalleled ways: his body and blood in the Eucharist, his forgiveness in Confession”*

Life may seem easier outside the Church he shares. But these divine treasures are only found within, and they carry Catholics through even the darkest of times.

The Webinar from the Generalate on November 8th addresses the three major abuses: sex, money and power. It is in our personal interest and that of our Province to be actively engaged and tuned in to the temptations that lure us in .... ***Please make sure to register by this Thursday.***

Thank you  
Mike

## *Please pray for our sick confreres*

**Fr. Joseph Dao Vu:** Fr. Joseph continues to be hospitalized in Tampa after his fall over a week ago outside the rectory of the parish. He cannot walk by himself yet though the Doctors are confident that he will make a full recovery. Please remember him.



**Fr. Raymond Jones** who had been hospitalized for a bladder infection is now back in Consolata Nursing Home in New Iberia.

However his health continues to decline and the doctors don’t feel there is too much more they can do other than keeping him as comfortable as possible and prevent any other infection. Do keep Fr. Raymond in your prayers and thoughts.

# Provincial Council Notes

## Appointment of Mission Secretary

Fr. Siprianus Ola Rotok has been appointed as Mission Secretary 2021-2023 by the Generalate. Thank you brother, you have done this before and we appreciate your willingness to serve again.



## Biblical Coordinator

The Provincial Council then proceeded to appoint Fr. Leon Ngandu as Biblical coordinator of the Province for the triennium 2021-2023.

Congratulations to both of these confreres and thank you sincerely for your collaboration and we look forward to your many gifts and talents that you will bring to these appointments.

## Request from the Houston-Galveston Diocese to staff a 3rd parish



Fr. Provincial informed of his visit to the Houston-Galveston Diocese in October where the Vicar General brought him to five different parishes. The diocese is giving us the pick of any of seven or eight parishes as their need to staff these parishes is urgent.

We will take this time to discern the feasibility of staffing one of these parishes as it would be good to have at least three parishes in the archdioceses. In the meantime the other Council members will visit the area. These parishes are multicultural in nature with a high percentage of Hispanics. They are within the urban area.

## Calendar of Events

| <i>Dates</i>              | <i>Event</i>               | <i>Place</i>             |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>8th November 2021</i>  | <i>Webinar—Generalate</i>  | <i>Via Internet—Link</i> |
| <i>7th—11th Feb. 2022</i> | <i>Provincial Assembly</i> | <i>Bay St. Louis</i>     |
| <i>5th—10th June 2022</i> | <i>Provincial Retreat</i>  | <i>Bay St. Louis</i>     |

## Provincial Council Notes Contd.

### Fr. Alfred Ayem, SVD

Due to concerns that have arisen Fr. Alfred Ayem has stepped down as Pastor from the St. Rose of Lima parish with immediate effect. He will be in residence at our community in the Bay while looking after a number of health concerns. Please keep him in your prayers.

### St. Rose of Lima Parish, Bay St. Louis

The Council have decided to name **Fr. Tom Mullally** in the interim period as Administrator of the parish. We will evaluate and plan accordingly before a new Pastor is assigned next summer.



I would like to thank *Fr. Tom Mullally* for answering our call and coming out of retirement to help us out in our time of need. He will be a steady hand and a good shepherd at the helm till then. Thank you sincerely Fr. Tom.

**Next Meeting** of the Provincial Council will be on Nov. 16th.

### ***Superior General Paulus Budi Kleden has called for all Divine Word Missionaries throughout the world to participate in the Laudato Si Action Platform (LSAP).***

The LSAP is composed of seven distinct goals, one for each year of the seven-year program. The goals are:

1. Response to the cry of the earth
2. Response to the cry of the poor
3. Ecological economics
4. Adoption of a sustainable lifestyle
5. Ecological education
6. Ecological spirituality
7. Community engagement and participatory action.



Each goal of the seven-year journey is intended to rebuild or reshape our relationships with our common home.

The first-year goal involves a call to educate ourselves about the ecological crisis. Are we aware of the enormous loss of biodiversity throughout the world? How can we collaborate with others to protect our common home?

The LSAP is intended for seven sectors within Church and society: 1) families, 2) parishes and dioceses, 3) educational institutions, 4) healthcare institutions, 5) organizations and groups, 6) religious congregations, and 7) the economic sector.

## Laudato Si—Contd.

As Religious congregations we are encouraged to develop our own process within the general framework.

The Society of the Divine Word and our province has the opportunity to contribute its unique perspective to the LSAP. The Superior General has asked us to achieve this goal through four pillars:



- Prayer: both personal and communal
- Education: learn about the ecological crisis and possible solutions
- Action: take steps to create a sustainable lifestyle and ecological justice
- Advocacy: engage in public efforts to promote systemic change

Each local community is asked to implement initiatives that focus on the four pillars.

For example, a community might prepare a prayer service that focuses on God's love for and care of all creation. Another idea might be to invite a speaker to talk about sustainability and how the community can begin a recycling program.

The Superior General has encouraged us to join with our lay partners on these initiatives. Parishes can provide leadership in carrying out the four pillars.

Parishioners can collaborate in advocacy efforts that promote sustainability.

Share your concerns with local politicians and government leaders.

It is important that we make our voices heard on ecological issues. Divine Word Missionaries around the world can make a big difference by committing to the LSAP.

I have asked our JPIC Coordinator to follow through on this project with the different districts and community. Let us do what we can as world leaders meet in Glasgow this week. Some of their sound bites: "*Climate change will catch up on us*", "*We are digging our own graves*", and Greta Thunberg said that "*Change is not going to come from inside there, We say no more blah, blah, blah.*" Finally: "*Every day we delay, the cost of inaction increases.*"

### November Birthday's



- 5 - Father James Pawlicki, SVD
- 9 - Father Thomas Mullally, SVD
- 9 - Father Benignus Lambertus Wego, SVD
- 16 - Superior General- Very Rev. Budi Kleden
- 17 - Father Augustine Wall, SVD
- 22 - Arulsamy Gnanavoli, SVD
- 27 - Father Pascal Chester, SVD
- 27 - Father Abelardo Gabriel, SVD

### November Death Anniversaries

- 6 - Father Anthony Bourges, SVD
- 11 - Bishop Domic Carmon, SVD
- 12 - Father John Dauphine, SVD
- 27 - Father John Bowman, SVD

