



# CALLINGS

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT VOCATIONS

## Walking with the Lakota - a ministry of great joy amid challenging pain

By Bill Pauly, SJ

There they lay. Father and daughter. He 65. She 3, lying at his left side, head upon his breast, in the casket. Both had died in a recent house fire, leaving behind 10 other daughters and sons. Rosalinda, 8, now the youngest surviving daughter, looked bewildered and lost, sad and somewhat in shock.

In my 13 years walking with and serving the Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, I have never had such a funeral. The tragic sudden deaths of the father and youngest daughter had stunned the whole community of Manderson, South Dakota. People filled the gym at Wounded Knee District School to pay their respects. In the course of the two-night wake, the Mass of Christian Burial, plus the meal and giveaway after the burial, I had the chance to ask Rosalinda if she ever heard what her name means in Spanish. She had not.

When I told her it means "pretty rose," she smiled through her tears. A little later I asked her again what her name meant, and she could not remember. I reminded her.



FR. BILL PAULY, SJ, ABOVE, IS A JESUIT PRIEST WHO WORKS WITH THE LAKOTA SIOUX ON THE PINE RIDGE RESERVATION IN SOUTH DAKOTA. HE ENTERED THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN 1965 AND HAS WORKED FOR THE PAST 13 YEARS IN NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRY.



FR. BILL PAULY, SJ, STANDS WITH SR. JULIE BROCKAMP, PBVM, OUTSIDE OUR LADY OF THE SIOUX CHURCH IN THE SMALL COMMUNITY OF OGLALA, SOUTH DAKOTA. A TORNADO IN JUNE 1999 LEVELED THE PARISH AND MUCH OF THE TOWN. FR. PAULY AND SR. JULIE, WHO COORDINATES PASTORAL ACTIVITIES AT THE PARISH AND WORKS CLOSELY WITH JESUITS, WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN HELPING THE LAKOTA REBUILD THE PARISH AND THE COMMUNITY.

We went through this process at least two more times. At the end of the funeral, in Lakota fashion, the whole mourning family forms a line, and everyone comes by a final time to offer support through a hug or a handshake. When I approached Rosalinda, I bent down and whispered, "again, what does your name mean?" This time, without hesitation, she proclaimed in a strong whisper "pretty rose!"

In her own simple, beautiful way, she was claiming her identity in the midst of great grief. In her own way, she became the face of God for me and inspired me to remember how God names us all as precious and beautiful in his creative love, even though we forget and forget. Grief makes us forget and fall into doubt. Rosalinda's gentle smile at remembering the meaning of her name became for me God's smile on us all, calling us back to the truth that destroys death forever, the victorious truth of Christ's death and resurrection. Her simple grief and her simple joy in her name tenderized me into a new appreciation of my own call from God as a Jesuit priest.

I was about 8 years old when a Notre Dame Sister at St. Mary's Grade School in Port Washington, Wisconsin said something to me about being a priest. I forget how she put the question, but I do →

→ FROM PAGE 1 remember saying "No way," and privately thinking, "If I am to be a priest, I want to be a Jesuit." Where that thought came from I do not know, except that I often had heard my dad praise the Jesuits for being good teachers. He had attended Marquette High School and Marquette University Law School.

I served Mass as a boy and recall riding my Schwinn bicycle 10 blocks to the church on winter mornings when the tires left tracks in the fresh snow. As an eighth-grader in 1961, I approached my pastor, Msgr. Hillenbrand. I told him I was interested in being a priest someday and thought I'd go to the local public high school and perhaps go to the seminary after high school.

"Go to that public school, and you will lose your vocation!" The old Monsignor never lacked clarity or clout in his words! So I joined 10 other boys from my eighth grade class and went to St. Lawrence Seminary, seeking to be a diocesan priest. In my junior year, I felt a desire to explore the Jesuits, and I visited the Jesuit Novitiate at St. Bonifacius, Minnesota. Tom Hughson, a novice there, welcomed me and showed me around, even taking me for a sailboat "cruise" on Lake Parley, which bordered the novitiate property. I left this visit with a sense that the Jesuits were not for me. However, during my senior year the desire returned, and I applied and was accepted into the novitiate in 1965 at the young age of 18.

I thought I would like to be a teacher at a high school or a university. Although I have taught at Creighton Prep High School for three years as part of my training, all my other work as a Jesuit has been pastoral in nature. After ordination (1979) I worked at Marquette University in campus ministry and lived in McCormick Hall for three years. Since then God has called me to cross-cultural ministries, first in Hispanic ministry at St. Patrick's parish in Milwaukee, and later, since 1989, in Native American ministry among the Lakota.

The call to Hispanic ministry had its roots in the Dominican Republic where, as a participant in the Institute of Latin American Concern in 1974, I began to learn Spanish and experienced the acceptance and love of a Dominican family with eight children. When I became terribly ill from drinking bad water, this family nursed me back to health. It was a profound experience of being loved first, before I had anything to offer. Moreover, I recall a long walk one day, carrying Holy Communion to an elderly woman in a rural village of the Dominican Republic, when God gave me a sense of joy and inner peace at his call



**PEOPLE LINE UP TO CONGRATULATE FR. BILL PAULY, SJ, DURING A CEREMONY AT WHICH LAKOTA LEADERS GAVE HIM A LAKOTA NAME IN TRIBUTE TO HIS YEARS OF LOVING SERVICE.**

to me to be a priest and to be a servant of Christ's mission.

I never imagined working with either Hispanic peoples or Native Americans when I first joined the Jesuits. I see now, at age 55 and a priest for 23 years, how the Society of Jesus has challenged and loved me and allowed me to grow up among its members. Throughout my formation, the guiding principle has been growth in interior freedom to know and do God's will for the coming of His kingdom. God and the Society have remained faithful even when I have had doubts; God's call remains irrevocable and full of tender mercies!

The Lakota people have taught me so much by their heart, humor, and hope in the face of great suffering and injustice. At the root of Lakota culture and spirituality is the sacrificial love captured in the Lakota phrase: *Hecel lena oyate kin nipi kte* (that these people may live). It also describes the motivation of Christ's life and a Jesuit's.

The very funeral of Rosalinda's father and younger sister expressed the Lakota heart, humor, and hope through the prayers offered, the meals shared for three days in a row, and the giveaway at the end. I thank God and Rosalinda for the chance to recognize the beauty of her name and person in the midst of her grief. It is an honor to get to know Rosalinda and her family. It is an honor and privilege to be welcomed into the families of many Lakota



**FR. BILL PAULY, SJ HOLDS A QUILT BEARING HIS LAKOTA NAME, WACINYANPI, WHICH MEANS 'DEPEND ON HIM.'**

people at profound levels; and this is all part of the Jesuit vocation and calling.

I have not merited it; honestly, I have not always wanted it. Yet the call remains, and I am very grateful that I do too! **G**

# Vocational choices: Differences between religious life and diocesan priesthood

**Fr. Warren Szama, SJ**

DIRECTOR OF VOCATIONS – WISCONSIN PROVINCE



I often find in my early conversations with men who are thinking about a vocation that they are unaware of or confused by the differences between diocesan priesthood and religious life. I thought, therefore, that it might be helpful to highlight some of these differences.

Let me start with the obvious and say that diocesan priesthood and religious life are both good and important vocations from God in the Church. The Church needs both diocesan priests and religious to be fully vital. Religious life is open to women and men while priesthood is open only to men. Women religious are often called sisters or nuns (although the latter technically refers only to monastic religious). Men religious can be either priests or brothers. Brothers are full members of their religious communities and can do any type of ministry – such as teaching or giving retreats. However brothers cannot administer the sacraments. For example, say mass or hear confessions.

Some of the main differences between religious life and the diocesan priesthood are that most religious take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience; they live in community; and they have a defining spirituality and unique mission from their founder or foundress (such as Sts. Ignatius, Francis, Claire, Benedict, or Dominic). Diocesan priests, on the other hand, don't take the same vows as religious (poverty, for example), live in community, or have a distinctive spirituality of a given founder.

Diocesan priests serve the bishop and people of a given diocese, or area of the Church, such

as Milwaukee, Omaha, the Twin Cities, Los Angeles, or New York. For the most part they serve in the parishes of their diocese under the direction of the diocesan bishop. Their ministry centers around the administration of the sacraments (saying Mass, doing baptisms, weddings, funerals, and hearing confessions).

The ministry of diocesan priests is essential to the life of the Church since they are the ones who lead and offer sacramental ministry in our parishes, and there is no Church without parishes and the sacraments.

One diocesan priest I know referred to diocesan priests as the general practitioners of the clergy and compared religious to specialists. As in medicine, the Church needs both. So, while for the most part diocesan priests serve in parishes, religious can serve in a variety of ways according to the "charism," or unique vision and mission of their founder. That might be in schools, hospitals, orphanages, missions, retreat houses, social justice centers, or other ministries in accordance with the inspiration, special vision, mission, and spirituality of their founder.

Just as there are differences between diocesan priests and religious, so too are there distinctions in religious communities between those that are monastic and those that are "active," or apostolic.

Benedictines are among the oldest and best known monastic communities. Others include the Trappists, Carthusians, and Norbertines. Monks usually take a vow of "stability" which means that they enter a specific monastery where they intend to spend their entire lives. They live a contemplative lifestyle centered on prayer – including the public singing of the Liturgy of the Hours and Mass and private, personal prayer. The contemplative lives of monks also usually include some kind of work in the monastery, ranging from farming or baking to teaching or retreats. In some cases a school or university might be affiliated with a specific monastery, making it possible for a

monk to teach by day, but return to their monastery at each day's end.

Active, or apostolic, communities, on the other hand, focus more on their apostolic work while also maintaining a regular prayer life.

It becomes a question of emphasis. Contemplative communities emphasize lives of prayer whereas active communities focus more on the apostolate.

This is all pretty general so far; so let me give the specific example of the religious community I know best – you guessed it, the Jesuits. We are an apostolic religious community. Our founder, St. Ignatius, referred to us as "contemplatives in action." In Ignatius' view, God wasn't just to be found in the monastery but "in all things" – very much including our ministry. Ignatius wanted Jesuits to be men of prayer who found God in the world and helped others to grow as disciples of Christ. This Jesuit spirituality is based primarily on the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius, which all Jesuits make in their complete form (a 30-day, silent, individually directed retreat) twice in their Jesuit lives.

The Jesuit charism, or mission, is to form Christian leaders for our world through our schools, retreat houses, parishes, and missionary activities. Whereas diocesan priests usually do one kind of ministry – parish work – in one specific region, Jesuits can be engaged in a wide variety of ministries (such as teaching, spiritual direction, giving retreats, counseling, research, writing, being a missionary, pastor, doctor, lawyer, actor, drama director, playwright, poet, scientist, theologian, philosopher, or historian) and can be called through our vow of obedience to serve wherever in the world we are most needed to do God's work.

Jesuits live in community, but Jesuit community life is quite different than that of monks such as the Benedictines. Unlike the Benedictines, see **SAZAMA** on back page →

## RECENT DISCERNMENT EVENTS



**NOVEMBER** – Six candidates from the Wisconsin Province joined nine from the Chicago Province at Loyola University in Chicago. They met young Jesuits in formation, heard vocation stories, and learned about the first stage of training after the novitiate. Candidates and Jesuits all had a good time in the process. Our next such Come and See Weekend will be offered April 11-13 (see UPCOMING EVENTS for details). →



**DECEMBER** – Eight candidates attended a Discernment Retreat at the Sheehan Retreat Center in Omaha. After learning about Jesuit life the first day, they entered into a two and a half day silent, personally directed prayer experience. Group sharing was an integral part of the retreat. Participants formed a strong community bond and found the experience helpful in discerning their vocations.

### → SAZAMA FROM PAGE 3

Ignatius did not want Jesuits to be monks and live in monasteries. Rather he wanted us to be available for mission and apostolic work. As a result, Jesuit community life is less structured. We do not pray the Divine Office in common, but we do celebrate Mass and eat meals together and have regular community gatherings which often include faith sharing and apostolic reflection.

If you feel called to spend your life in parish ministry in a specific locale and to live a more independent lifestyle, then you may well have a vocation from God to be a diocesan priest. What attracts me and many others to Jesuit life, on the other hand, are living in community, opportunities to be engaged in a variety of ministries in

different places, and the rich heritage of our Jesuit/Ignatian Spirituality. I have found these aspects of Jesuit religious life to be immensely enriching, challenging, and growthful. They continue to give me much to share with others in my ministry as a Jesuit.

The same could be said for members of other religious communities as well as diocesan priests. So for each person called to religious life and/or priesthood, it's a question of which path – religious or diocesan and, if religious, which community – is most life-giving for you and most arouses your passion and best allows you to joyfully share your gifts in service.

In other words, which choice is the best fit for you? **G**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FEB 14-17

**DISCERNMENT RETREAT** at the Jesuit Retreat House near Denver, CO. This retreat, which takes place at our retreat house in the beautiful foothills of the Rocky Mountains, is on the long Presidents' Day Weekend. It starts on Friday afternoon and ends with lunch on Monday. This is a silent, prayer retreat on which you will have daily conversations with a young Jesuit in training.

The retreat will include some presentations on Jesuit life. Since this is a busy ski weekend in the Denver area, airline reservations need to be made early.

### APRIL 11-13

**COME AND SEE WEEKEND** at the Jesuit house of studies at Loyola U. in Chicago. This weekend is for all inquirers who are interested in learning more about Jesuit life and training. You'll spend the weekend with young Jesuits in training, who will share their vocation stories and experiences of Jesuit life and formation. We'll begin with Mass at 5 p.m. on Friday and end with lunch on Sunday.

### JUNE 6

**JESUIT ORDINATIONS** at 7 p.m. at St. Luke's Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. There will be a simple meal beforehand and a reception after. The ordinands will be: Greg Lynch, SJ (who taught at Creighton Prep in Omaha), Chris Manahan, SJ and Jim McDermott, SJ (who both taught at Red Cloud Indian School in South Dakota), and John Thiede, SJ (who taught at Marquette High in Milwaukee). You are also welcome to attend their First Masses on Saturday and Sunday. Please let us know if you need a place to stay overnight.

### JUNE 20 - AUG 3

**SIX WEEKS A JESUIT** program in the Chicago-Milwaukee areas. This is an opportunity to live in a Jesuit community and work in a Jesuit ministry with other men considering the Jesuits. It is an excellent way to get a better feel for what it might be like to be a Jesuit.

### JUNE 21-23

**VOCATION DAYS** at our Jesuit vacation spot on the Chain of Lakes near Waupaca, Wisconsin.

These days are for younger candidates who are high school age or college underclassmen (having just finished sophomore year of college or younger). This will be a chance to get to know the Jesuits better in the relaxed atmosphere and beauty of our rustic Loyola Villa. We'll have presentations on Jesuit life by young Jesuits in training in the mornings, daily Mass, chances for small group sharing, and plenty of time to enjoy the lakes with swimming, water skiing, canoeing, rope swing, and good Jesuit-cooked meals.

### AUGUST 16

**FIRST VOW CELEBRATION** in St. Paul, MN. Join us for the joyful celebration of the first vows of our second year novices from our St. Paul novitiate community. It will be held at 10 a.m. at St. Luke's Church on Lexington and Summit Avenue. You are welcome to attend a cook-out in honor of the vow men on Friday evening, August 15th, a lunch after the Vow Mass at noon on Saturday, as well as a meal for the vow men on Saturday evening. Please let us know if you'll need overnight lodging on Friday or Saturday nights.

## Ongoing Vocation Discernment Groups

We have two discernment groups for men considering the Jesuits.

**Milwaukee group:** contact Fr. Tim Lannon, SJ at Marquette University (414-288-5075, timothy.lannon@marquette.edu).

**Omaha group:** contact Fr. Dick Hauser, SJ at Creighton University (402-280-3010, hausersj@creighton.edu).



## CALLINGS

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT VOCATIONS

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Jesuit Vocation Director for Upper Midwest and Great Plains

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