

TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS

Ordinations in a Pandemic Year

Around the world, twenty-nine deacons of the Legionaries of Christ had their priestly ordination plans changed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Originally they were to be ordained, with their families and friends present, on May 2, 2020, at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome, Italy. Because of constraints on travel and social distancing, most of the deacons were ordained in the territories where they are from or are currently working in, by local bishops, with limited attendance, and live streaming for those who could not be there with them in person.

Deacon Christopher Gronotte, LC, was ordained to the priesthood on August 1st at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington, Kentucky, by Bishop Roger Joseph Foys. In his homily, the bishop reflected on all the day's Scripture readings, including the Epistle reading from II Cor. 4, which includes the following verse: "But we hold this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us."

Bishop Foys advised Christopher, saying, "I've been a priest for forty-seven years, and I can assure you that if you preach Jesus Christ, and not yourself, you will have a fulfilling and happy priesthood." He continued, "We don't preach so we can have a following—leave that to Hollywood and the fan clubs. We preach Jesus Christ." A video of the ordination can be found on the Internet using this link: <https://vimeo.com/443790371>

Among the priests attending the ordination was Christopher's older brother, Fr. Andrew Gronotte, LC, who vested his brother during the ceremony. His mother, Mary Anne, and his younger sister, Elizabeth, were also present. Unfortunately, his father, Tim, died unexpectedly in 2017.

Fr. Gronotte was born and raised near Cincinnati, Ohio, in Fort Mitchel, Kentucky. He attended the Legion's Apostolic School beginning in seventh grade and says, "I wasn't thinking of being a



Fr. Andrew Gronotte, Mary Anne Gronotte, Fr. Christopher, and his sister Elizabeth

priest [but] little by little, through spiritual direction and lots of time in prayer, I realized that I was really happy here in the Legion and that this is where God wants me."

After his ordination, Fr. Gronotte will continue in his position as dean of students at the Legion's Sacred Heart Apostolic School in Indiana. Please pray for Fr. Gronotte and the other twenty-eight Legionaries ordained this year from Brazil, Canada, Colombia, El Salvador, Germany, Italy, Mexico, the Philippines, Poland, Spain and Venezuela.

Four Legionaries were ordained as transitional deacons on August 15th, the Feast of the Assumption, at the Notre Dame Parish in Michigan City, Indiana. Deacons Michael Sester, Russell Ward, Vinh Pham and Seth Sabata join the other 21 Legionaries ordained as transitional deacons around the world during the pandemic. Please keep all the newly ordained in your prayers.

(more photos of ordinations on the following page)



1. Dcn. Christopher prayerfully considers the moment of ordination **2.** Fr. Christopher offers communion to his mother for the first time as a priest **3.** Dcn. Christopher prostrates himself before Our Lord **4.** Fr. Christopher hugs his brother, Fr. Andrew after being ordained **5.** Bishop Roger Joseph Foyt lays hands on Fr. Christopher during his ordination

Diaconate Ordinations

Four Legionaries of Christ were ordained to the Transitional Diaconate on August 15 in Rolling Prairie, Indiana.

1. Dcn. Russell Ward is vested by Fr. Shawn Aaron, Territorial Director, and Fr. David Daly. **2.** Fr. Shawn Aaron with (L-R) Dcn. Russell Ward, Dcn. Seth Sabata, Dcn. Vinh Pham, and Dcn. Michael Sester



SPIRITUAL MOTHERHOOD OF PRIESTS

A Life-Long Relationship of Prayer

Mary Anne Gronotte, a Regnum Christi member and mother of two Legionary priests (Andrew and Christopher), felt a persistent nudging by the Holy Spirit to begin an apostolate of praying for priests. She knows how much her sons, and all priests, benefit from the consistent and faithful prayers of the laity.

The role of praying for priests as a spiritual mother was once considered something done only by cloistered nuns. In 2007, the Congregation of the Clergy, with the approval of Pope Benedict XVI, invited lay women to adopt priests as their spiritual sons, and to pray for them constantly, particularly before the Blessed Sacrament. “The vocation to be a spiritual mother for priests is largely unknown, scarcely understood, and, consequently, rarely lived,” states the Congregation of the Clergy. “It is a vocation that is frequently hidden, invisible to the naked eye, but meant to transmit spiritual life.”

Besides weekly adoration, the women commit to saying daily prayers for their priest-son throughout the day, and frequenting the sacrament of confession as often as they can. Perhaps the most difficult commitment to keep is that of anonymity: the women are required to remain anonymous to their priest-son. In the spirit of humility, and with the example of Jesus’ own mother Mary, who “kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart,” the women are discouraged from divulging to each other, and especially to their priest-sons, for whom they are praying. “There is something very sweet and hidden about praying for someone I’ve never met and will probably never meet,” describes one spiritual mother. “I like to think that even though I won’t know my spiritual son here on earth, we will recognize each other in Heaven.”

In 2012, at Mary Anne’s invitation, 45 women came to the initial meeting. Today, more than 250 women in the Ohio Valley region have become spiritual mothers to priests in their dioceses and to the Legionary priests who serve the area. These women are committed to praying for their adopted priest-sons in a dedicated and maternal way, starting with a weekly Holy Hour.



Mary Anne Gronotte

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Transitions in Cheshire

Between the end of the spring semester and the beginning of fall classes, there are many new community arrivals and departures. The season began with ten candidates who arrived in June for Summer Candidacy, an extended experience of religious life before determining if they will enter novitiate in September. With the guidance of Fr. Edward Hopkins, LC, they learn what to expect from living, studying and praying in a Legionary novitiate. New novices receive their cassocks in mid-September and join the other novices under the guidance of novice instructor Fr. Joseph Brickner, LC.

On the first weekend of September, the First Professions Mass took place when five novices made their initial vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. The promises they made previously to these three evangelical vows of religious life are now elevated to a more informed vow. Due to the pandemic, this is the first time the First Professions Mass was not open to the general public. However, as is becoming more familiar, the Mass was streamed on the Internet.



Fr. Timothy Walsh, LC

The community also welcomes a new rector, Fr. Timothy Walsh, who officially began his position on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15th. We are grateful to Fr. Kevin Meehan, LC, the departing rector, for his three years of service.

Fr. Timothy brings with him ten years of formation experience, starting in 2006 as the vice-rector of Sacred Heart Apostolic School, and later as its rector. He was also



Young men in the Candidacy Program evangelize on the town green in Waterbury, CT.

rector of the former Immaculate Conception Apostolic School in New Hampshire.

The plan of religious formation that was begun provisionally in Cheshire three years ago with Fr. Meehan will continue under Fr. Walsh. This formation program, which was ratified at the Legion's General Convention earlier this year, broadens the focus on interior freedom and personal maturity for novices and humanists. Fr. Walsh also has set the goal of working toward regional academic accreditation.

Cheshire currently has more than sixty seminarians discerning and preparing for the priesthood. Because of COVID-19 and travel restrictions, it took some extra time for new seminarians traveling from other countries to arrive in Cheshire. Late in August, twenty-one humanists left Cheshire to continue their studies in Rome.

May God bless these fine young men as they pursue their vocations! Thank you for your continued prayers and support.



Fr. Shawn Aaron, Territorial Director (center) with Br. Eduardo Urdaneta, Br. Elija McLellan, Br. Ricardo Gurrola, Br. John Wilson, and Br. Raul Espinoza, who made first professions on September 5 in Cheshire.

FORMING LEADERS TO CHANGE THE WORLD!

For three years, Jesus Christ crisscrossed the Holy Land of Judea, Galilee, and beyond, fulfilling his mission to redeem humanity and saving us from our sins. He spent these three years of his “public life” preaching in synagogues, teaching on hillsides and shorelines, healing the sick, raising the dead—preparing his disciples to continue beyond his cross.

From among his followers, he chose twelve men to follow him as his closest disciples, three of which would be his closest friends, with whom he shared the most profound of experiences.

Imperfect in many ways, these men became the first links in the chain of evangelization that would affect the world from then on. For three years, these men watched every move, heard every word, prayed from their hearts and practiced what they learned from Christ, their teacher. Jesus was unlike any other teacher. The care and interest that he showed every person he encountered was unlike anything the world had ever seen before, and the apostles, his closest friends, lived every scene that the Gospel recounts. Together with his Blessed Virgin Mother Mary, Mary Magdalen (the apostle to the apostles) and the other holy women, each was commissioned with the same lifelong mission: “Go and make disciples of all nations! Continue my mission to heal, baptize, announce the coming of the Kingdom!”

Throughout his public ministry, Jesus modeled empathy and forgiveness, challenging everyone to take one step forward in their ongoing conversion. He taught them the value of simple, quiet daily prayer, and from these moments came the inspirations that would motivate them throughout their lives. Jesus was not content with the comfort of the status quo, but was committed to encouraging, preparing and challenging his followers to be bold, fearless and creative in the ways they would announce the Kingdom to the world. How can we, more than 2000 years later, continue Jesus’ work?

- First, to follow the example of the Lord with his first disciples, we must begin with daily prayer. What has the Lord laid on our hearts and what gifts has he given us?

- Second, it is important to surround ourselves with Christians who will encourage us to exercise our gifts. It is too easy to give up, worrying that our inspirations to serve are too difficult. We need others to help us through periods of self-doubt.

- Third, we can prepare through study and doing the essential groundwork to

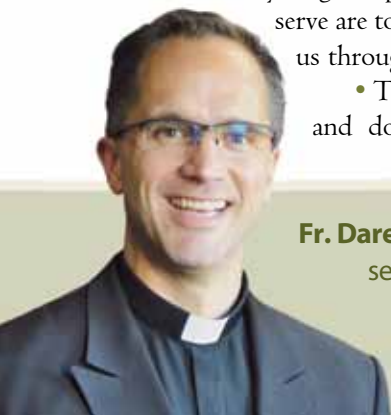


accomplish our goals to build the Kingdom of Christ. Nothing worthwhile is ever easy.

- Finally, we can challenge ourselves and others to stay faithful for the long haul. There are no quick solutions. A good leader is sensitive to continually improving and building upon a firm foundation.

Over the years, numerous schools, apostolates and initiatives have been launched by members of Regnum Christi throughout the world. Through these efforts, men and women on every continent have personally experienced Jesus Christ, opened their hearts and minds to Christ’s inspiration, and embraced his invitation to be his disciples and apostles of his Kingdom.

The mission and dream of every Legionary and member of Regnum Christi is to keep the dynamic of Christ alive! Forming apostles after his own heart, forming apostles that will set the world ablaze, forming apostles that will change the world, forming apostles like Jesus did! Let us lift up in prayer all priests, religious, consecrated, laymen and laywomen as they spend their lives revealing the love of Christ, forming souls in the school of Christ’s mercy and mission, and launching them as Christ’s missionary apostles.



Fr. Daren Weisbrod, LC joined the Legionaries of Christ in 1993. Ordained in 2006, he has primarily served in the Legion’s seminaries and schools. In July of 2020, he completed his Masters in Educational Leadership from the University of Notre Dame’s Remick Leadership Program. He currently serves as Chaplain at The Highlands School in Irving, Texas.

“I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU”

A Ministry to the Elderly

Dawn Snyder has been a Regnum Christi member for more than twenty years and a spiritual guide for more than sixteen of those years. She reflects, “When I learned about Regnum Christi, it was as if God said, ‘I have something for you, something to help you be a better Christian. It’s about love.’” Her experience as a spiritual director, along with her volunteer experience, prepared her for the position of Director of Mission and Pastoral Care for St. Francis Senior Ministries, a Catholic continuing care senior ministries campus.

“Everything I learned from the Legionary priests and Regnum Christi educated me in accompanying others. It humbled me and taught me to see what others need. I didn’t feel qualified for this job; I didn’t have enough of confidence. But in God’s perfect timing, a Regnum Christi friend encouraged me, pointed out my strengths and talents in the face of my doubts, and actually helped me work through the application process. God worked through her; she was confident for me.”

Dawn values the spiritual direction she receives from Fr. Robert DeCesare as so important to her spiritual growth and strength. “Spiritual direction helps ensure good discernment, and it helps me live out the call I received to follow Christ in Regnum Christi.” This call is bearing fruit in her work.

“I love bringing Christ to others, whether as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion or as I accompany others when they are down, depressed or grieving.” She recalls, “During my interview at St. Francis Senior Ministries, the executive director asked, ‘What do you

think would be the most important part of your work?’ I replied, ‘I am a spiritual director, and what I see as most important for this role are one-to-one conversations with the residents. I am interested in their souls. I want to know what they need and what can I do for them through the Holy Spirit.’”

Her intuition has been borne out. Dawn says, “Spiritual direction and prayer are the most important things I do. It may not be formal spiritual direction, but the residents are accompanied—talking, holding someone’s hand and sitting with them. I go to the chapel and pray for our residents daily. I make sure that what goes on is about them.”

It is important to Dawn that every person feels supported in their human dignity and their possibility to flourish. Individual nourishment is an objective of every activity, whether in making the sacraments available, celebrating the lives of deceased residents, or working with plants to inspire hope.

Dawn mentions how challenging COVID-19 has made her ministry, “Because of the precautions and protocol for COVID-19, I have to distance myself and always wear a mask. They love the visits, but we all miss the closeness.” She continues, “In a visit with one of our residents, we were talking and sharing, me wearing my mask and keeping a distance from her, and she started crying. I said to her, ‘Is everything alright, are you okay?’ She said, ‘I’m crying because of the love in this room.’ Then I started to cry and said, ‘I know that right at this moment, God is giving us the warmest, most loving hug.’ We both said, ‘It’s the best hug we have ever had.’”

Working with the elderly, part of Dawn’s work is accompanying the dying. She says, “One of the biggest honors I have is being with people who are actively dying; they are going to be with the Father forever. I have no words for it.” She tries to attend every funeral. In the bereavement packet families receive, Dawn assures the family of her continued prayers and availability.

Dawn says, “Regnum Christ and the support of the Legionary priests and the consecrated women all help me to be the best Catholic I can, the best person I can, making me the best version of myself. And their support is what prepared me for this work.”



Dawn Snyder



TGIFF PODCAST

Thank God It's First Friday



Fr. Hugh Ryan, LC, joined Br. Andrew (left) and Br. Luke (center) On episode 9.

Brother Luke Rawicki, LC, and Brother Andrew Torrey, LC, are studying for the priesthood at the Legionaries of Christ seminary in Rome, Italy. Raised in Louisiana, they entered the novitiate together in 2009 and are now finishing their graduate degrees in Rome. After being interviewed for a podcast, they decided they would try creating one of their own. Thus, TGIFF was born: a monthly podcast available on Apple, Google, and Spotify.

Since September 2019, the brothers have recorded more than a dozen installments to give listeners a view into the heart of the Church in Rome. The brothers want listeners “to see, through our lives” their unique experiences and encounters. They don’t just explore topics in the abstract, but explore what that topic or experience means to them personally. With so much negativity on the internet, they hope to provide positive information about their vocations and share this joy with other people.

The podcasts are spiritually nourishing and informative but also refreshingly lighthearted. The brothers begin each 30 to 40 minute podcast by singing a harmonized jingle composed by Br. Luke. While both are musically inclined, Br. Andrew is responsible for directing music at the seminary and teaching his fellow Legionaries how to harmonize. In addition to their studies, seminarians contribute to the community with particular assignments using their talents.

Podcast conversations are unscripted as might be expected in a talk-show format. One episode had the general theme “The Evangelizing Power of Beauty.” The brothers frequently share events they are going through and earlier this year they discussed their intensive exams. Br. Andrew recently passed his 1.5 hour oral exams for a Masters in Philosophy. His 74-page thesis was titled “How Do I Know if an Action is Good or Bad?” The brothers expect this will be a subject for a future podcast.

If you would like to learn more about the life and thoughts of Legionary seminarians in Rome, the TGIFF podcast is an excellent glimpse into hearts minds of our future priests.



Schedule of Events

Please be sure to call ahead to make sure your event has not been postponed

Atlanta Area

Retreats, marriage prep and enrichment

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

www.rcatlanta.org | 770-837-2798

Washington, D.C. Area – OLB Retreat Center

Retreats, marriage prep and enrichment

See website for dates and information.

www.ourladyofbethesda.org
301-365-0612

Connecticut Area

Legion of Christ Novitiate & College of Humanities

See events at www.LCCheshire.org | 203-271-0805

Dallas Area

Retreats, marriage prep and enrichment

See website (events) for dates and information.

www.dfw-rc.org

Greater Charlotte Area

Retreats, spiritual exercises and enrichment

See website (retreats or events) for dates and information. www.rcgreatercharlotte.com

Greater Ohio Valley Area

Retreats, spiritual exercises and enrichment

See web site (events) for dates and information.

www.rcohiovalley.org

Houston Area

Retreats, spiritual exercises and enrichment

See website (resources) for dates and information.

www.thykingdomcome.us

New York/New Jersey/Connecticut Area

Retreats, marriage prep and enrichment

See website (events) for dates and information.

www.regnumchristinyctnj.org

914-244-3685 | info@RegnumChristinyctnj.org

Missions

Online Spiritual Resources/Retreat Guides

www.rcspirituality.org

Study Circle Guides, Ask a Priest - Q&A

contact@rcspirituality.org

Mission Youth Missions – International Missions

See website for dates:

www.missionyouth.com | 855-556-6872

missionyouth@missionnetwork.com

Helping Hands Medical Missions

See website (join) for dates: www.hhmm.org

972-253-1800 | mission@hhmm.org



L to R: Br. John Wilson, Br. Raul Espinoza, Br. Elija McLellan, Br. Ricardo Gurrola, and Br. Eduardo Urdaneta make their first profession of vows.

PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE... Provide for the Church

With the end of 2020 fast approaching, now is a good time to consider gifts that will give you an extra tax benefit this year.

There are a few ways, other than giving out right cash, that have some other benefits for you, while helping our mission. Other than cash, which is always welcome to fund annual scholarships for our seminarians, you might find one of these suits your needs:

- Gifts of Securities
- Creating a Charitable Gift Annuity
- Qualified Charitable Distribution from your traditional IRA

These special gifts also help the Legion well into the future, beyond the year they are received.

Some reasons to consider one of these special gifts:

- Gifts of appreciated securities are deductible at their full value and avoid capital gains tax. Such a gift may allow for a

gift greater than might be possible with cash alone.

- Charitable Gift Annuities offer you a dependable, fixed payment for the rest of your life while providing a tax deduction now.
- Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), for those who turned age 70-1/2 in 2019 or are older, offers a way to benefit even if you don't itemize on your tax return. Although there is no required minimum distribution (RMD) in 2020, you can use our site FreeWill.com/QCD/LegionOfChrist to make a gift from your traditional IRA and reduce your income.

These gifts may afford special tax advantages for you. If you are interested in making such a planned gift, please contact us. Andy Bamber, Director of Planned Giving, can work with you to provide any information or assistance you require.

Making A Special Gift

Plan today... Change the future!

Yes, I would like to consider making a special gift please contact me to discuss some gift options:

Will Trust Retirement account Life insurance Other _____

Please send me your new brochure *How Tax Law Changes Affect Your Charitable Giving* to consider other options

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Our Mission

We work as Jesus did. We reveal his love, form apostles and send them out to help build the Kingdom of Christ. We help awaken the individual and the family to their mission in life and in the Church.

Who We Are

We are an apostolic movement of evangelization composed of four vocations – Legionaries of Christ, Consecrated Women, Lay Consecrated Men and Lay Members – called to help people discover Christ's love and build his Kingdom.

What We Do

Regnum Christi has a Christ-centered spirituality that is lived together in communion with all members, in union with the whole Church and through a mission to build the Kingdom of Christ.

ON OUR MASTHEAD

Br. Joseph Rice – Fairfax, VA

Br. Ricardo Gurrola – Santa Clara, CA

Missionaries in Action | Witnesses In a Secular World

BRINGING THE MISSION BACK HOME

When Father Michael Moriarty, LC, (below) brought a group of fifteen young missionaries to rural Ecuador at the beginning of March, they arrived in the middle of a monsoon. Each day, while one half of the missionary group worked with members of the local community to build the school wall, the other half would visit the homes in the surrounding rural area to talk and pray with the local families. When the missionaries left just ten days later, the world was in the midst of a pandemic.

“We all knew that getting back would be really different,” says Father Michael. “All the universities had cancelled classes for the rest of the year.” The students realized that returning home was just like embarking on another mission.

The biggest task Father Michael faces once he returns from

a mission is finding ways to harness the student's excitement and adventure of serving Christ overseas, and bringing it back home. “This mission experience is meant to circle back to a longer term follow-up of at-home mission,” says Father Michael.

Since returning, students have gone on local missions in Philadelphia, adapting what they can do in a safe way. They have been distributing thousands of packages each weekend containing lunches, toiletries and socks to local people in need.

Going on a mission abroad is a life-changing apostolic adventure that Father Michael believes every young person should experience. He hopes students won't abandon the mission when they return from abroad, but instead, bring the mission back with them and continue it at home.



To find out more about Mission Youth in your area, visit missionyouth.com