

F A L L / W I N T E R O F 2 0 1 0

SOLT Rome

Newsletter



THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR OF FORMATION

Dear Family and Friends, Benefactors and the SOLT Family,

SOLT seminarians have begun a new year in Italy! We enjoy the beauty of autumn and Rome, but mostly we feel blessed to pray, work, and grow together as one body. The unity among the men is awesome!

This year we have a team of eight seminarians. These men come to SOLT from the United States, the Republic of Panama, the Cayman Islands, Mexico, and the Philippines.

It's exciting to see how the vision of the Society to bring all peoples into union with the Most Holy Trinity through discipleship of Jesus and Mary is being witnessed. Men from different cultures and backgrounds embrace each other as brothers and help one another become servants of the people of God.

THE RECTOR'S CORNER

The staff here at the SOLT House of Studies: Fr. Jerry Drolshagen (Vice-Rector), Fr. Derek Anderson (Academic Dean) and myself the Rector, are thrilled to begin a new academic year in Rome.

In this newsletter we wish to introduce you to the men who have answered the call to follow Christ and invite you into the lives and experiences of those you support in order that you may sense the incredible work of grace that is transforming these men to become priests of God in the Church and in the Society of Our Lady. We hope you enjoy it.

Thank you for your continued support of our seminarians!

Fr. Brady Williams
Rector



The Word of God in our lives and in the life and mission of the Church



This year's theme in the formation of the seminarians is "The Word of God."

With this in mind, our Rector, Fr. Brady Williams, prepared a silent retreat for all of us, which was titled "The Word of God in our lives and in the life and mission of the Church".

As a preamble to this retreat Fr. Williams took us to the Marian Shrine of Loretto, which contains the house of Nazareth where Jesus, Mary and Joseph lived. It was in this house that the Word became flesh in the womb of Our Blessed Mother. It was also in this house where Jesus lived in humble obedience to His earthy parents for 30 years. Having been given the opportunity of visiting this amazing shrine and participating at Mass helped us to open our hearts to receive the Word of God in our lives.

Throughout the five days of retreat we were given teachings about how the Word of God is our food and the food of the Church.

Five days of talks and moments of reflection, meditation and contemplation helped us to deepen our love, reverence and knowledge of the Word, to move beyond a fundamentalist understanding of Scripture and to experience how Sacred Scripture brings us into an encounter with God. The Scriptures transforms us through the Word of God.

JESUS LIVES!

By Br. Beau Schweitzer

50,000 people fill St. Peter's Square. Why? Because Jesus lives.

We enter the throng. Br. Tristan speaks just enough Italian, English, Spanish, French and Chinese to get us into trouble everywhere we go. But on this special day, Br. Tristan's scrambled languages so confuse the Swiss Guards, we receive a spot in the front of the square for this Canonization Mass celebrated by Pope Benedict XVI. The entire Church rejoices; we know definitively that these six men and women have finished the race.

Standing in Mass, surrounded by the Christ's Body, we awaken to a deeper sense of Incarnation.

Yes. The Word became flesh. God dwelt amongst us. God invites us to live in Him. In Jesus, we're made to be one.

Yes. God in His infinite humility enslaves Himself, entering a tiny host so that Christ's body--that God's entirety--might dwell within *me*.

Yes. We can become saints! Like Scripture, like the Eucharist, **these men and women became manifestations of the Word dwelling amongst us**. Wow! Jesus unites Himself to them. What does he want for me?

Our first journey to St. Peter's occurs during the Beatification Mass of Cardinal John Henry Newman. Broadcast from England on enormous screens, we behold the mystery. The following weekend Blessed Chiara Luce's Beatification brings this mystery right to Rome. Most of us were born in the same decade as Blessed Chiara. Holiness isn't a call for the past. It's the hope for our future.

We stand at the front of the square, beside our brothers, before the Pope and the world, before these saints in heaven. And Jesus Himself comes. He's lifted before us in the Eucharist and asks "Body of Christ?" "Will you become the person you are to receive? Will you become my life?" We behold the 'Yes' of these saints. Now its our turn.

Incarnation. It's not enough to receive our Lord. May we become Him. Like the blessed, like these saints, may God's love take flesh in our hearts. May our lives respond to Jesus that all the world might join the Church to proclaim, "Amen! Jesus lives!"

The men in formation

Br. Juan Villagomez (Graduate Studies)

I was born in Mexico City on March 11th, 1978. I grew up in the border town of Nuevo Laredo; the youngest of three. I have recently finished my theological studies in Rome and I am currently working on a licentiate in biblical theology as I await ordination to the diaconate.



Br. Al Abainza (2nd Year Theology)

I am from Legazpi, Philippines. I was a nurse, social worker, and teacher by profession and have served in the island missions of SOLT for 27 years. It was during this time that I realized that I had a calling to become a priest.

Br. Luis Bergantino (2nd Year Theology)

From Panama City, Panama I came across SOLT in 2001 while visiting Corpus Christi, Texas. There I saw how SOLT is Eucharist-Centered, how it's members really see Mary as Our Lady, and the love "the Society" has for the Holy Father and the Church. I was convinced that this is home for me.



Br. Patrick Prajzner (2nd Year Theology)

I was born and raised in the Detroit area, one of four kids to Patrick Sr. and Susan. After high school I served in the Marines for 6 years and attended Wayne State University in Detroit studying physics. I came to know SOLT when I was in college while I was discerning which community I was called to serve in as a priest. I have been a religious brother in SOLT since 2006.



The men in formation

Br. Beau Schweitzer (1st Year Theology)

I got to grow up on a cattle ranch in Idaho, study Philosophy at Notre Dame and become a school teacher. After teaching in inner city Los Angeles and a Honduran orphanage, I found my home with SOLT. How's school? Every morning, I still feel like I'm getting to go on a date with God.



Br. Tristan Abbott (1st Year Theology)

I am from the Cayman Islands. This year Our Lord has blessed me by giving me the opportunity to study theology in the beautiful and historic city of Rome and to live in community with great Brothers who call me on to holiness.

Br. Francis Christopher Coyne (1st Year Theology)

My full religious name is Br. Francis Christopher Joseph of the Child Jesus. I am 30, from Reno Nevada, and have studied theology and psychology at Franciscan University of Steubenville and the Institute for the Psychological Sciences. I have experience in roofing and construction. Now I am happy to be studying for the priesthood in Rome.



Br. Michael Slovak (1st Year Theology)

I grew up in Beaumont, Texas. After graduating from Texas A&M University, I worked in a hospital for three years in Houston as a Biomedical Engineer. God was preparing me for Religious life. I brought communion to hospital patients and led a Theology of the Body Study Group before I finally met SOLT at the Ark of the Covenant in Florida during Hurricane Katrina.

Our mission of forming men to the Priesthood in the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity greatly depends on the generous donations of people like you who wish to help men give the gift of their lives for the service of God and of His people. Please continue to support our seminarians.

All tax-deductible donations may be made payable to:

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