

Along the way

"Were not our hearts burning within us as he opened the Scriptures for us along the way." — Luke 24:32

A publication of **sabbath retreats**, the preaching ministry of Father Lou Papes

Pope Francis inspires new retreat theme



A picture IS worth a thousand words!

After a nearly three year hiatus, the preaching of retreats and days of recollection is beginning to return to my schedule, primarily because of the inspiration of Pope Francis. His apostolic exhortation ***The Joy of the Gospel*** moved me to consider reshaping much of my retreat preaching to the key concepts of that document.

His call for dialogue, compassion and joy is exactly what the Church and the world needs in these troubled times. And more than his words, his actions in these first two years of his papal ministry are at the heart of his message. The true joy of the Gospel is not so much in the words as it is the joy of the Gospel in action.

That "translation," ***The Joy of the Gospel in Action***, is the focus of the newest theme of parish missions, retreats and days of recollection which will be launched in the new year. At this time, the first such day of recollection will be at the Church of Christ Our Light in Camden, New Jersey, on Saturday, February 21st.

Another day-long version of this theme will be presented to the seniors citizens of St. Richard Church here in the Cleveland Diocese in late April. The only three day parish mission currently scheduled will be preached at Our Lady Help of Christians Parish in Litchfield, Ohio, March 9-11.

Themes to be covered in each of the formats include:

♦ A Love That Is Inclusive

In one of his first homilies as the Bishop of Rome, he said: "We are all children of God -- all of us. And God loves us -- all of us."

♦ A Healer Who Is Healed

Francis' famous "Who am I to judge" and his demand that "our church doors should always be open" so that those who seek God "will not find a closed door" is in the finest tradition of the Good Shepherd.

♦ A Gospel That Empowers

Francis has called for our discipleship to be rooted in fervor, joy, generosity, courage, and boundless love.

Check the Sabbath Retreats website www.sabbathretreats.org for updates on these themes and the dates of all presentations as well as weekly homilies which are posted every Friday afternoon.



*"Just hold on kid ; you'll get your chance to speak!
He wants to hear everyone's story."
A new era of openness and dialogue.*

Four who helped shape me have passed

The death December 14 of Bishop A. Edward Pevec, auxiliary emeritus of the Cleveland Diocese, marked the fourth recent death of a personal mentor. It's been a rough few months.

I have always been a "hero worshipper" when it came to people who influenced my life with love and compassion. So when some of the most significant mentors in my life recently left this world, their loss saddened me, but also filled me with remarkable joy that I was so blessed by their presence in my life. If I could, I would canonize every one of them!

Bishop A. Edward Pevec

Bishop Pevec was just Father Pevec, when he was assigned to St. Lawrence in 1952 when I was in seventh grade there. He stayed a little more than a year, but in that time, he took me in hand and trained me to be a master of ceremonies in the old Latin solemn high Mass. That put me right next to the celebrant through most of the Mass. It symbolically put me in charge of the liturgy: bowing to the deacon or sub-deacon signal their move from their often stationery position and turning the pages of the Latin missal for the celebrant.

When Father Pevec left to join the faculty of the new Borromeo High School Seminary in fall of 1953, he told my parents to "chase" me into the seminary. I eagerly accepted the challenge, joining the seminary for my sophomore year. Unfortunately, I was expelled at the end of my junior year! (Though I didn't know it at the time, that was actually a blessing in so many ways!)



Sister Rita Ann Mocer, O.P.

Like so many of the Adrian Dominicans who taught at St. Lawrence, Sister Rita Ann was always so kind that we often felt that not doing what was right would disappoint her. It was especially true of Rita Ann because she was our second grade teacher—our First Communion teacher! I can't think of anyone whom I would have rather had as the one to teach me about receiving Jesus than Sister Rita Ann. I'm thankful that I was able to repeatedly tell her that over the years when I visited here wherever she was ministering at the time. Sister died September 4th at the age of 95.

George Eppley

From my high school days in the minor seminary, before I was expelled, George Eppley was my junior English teacher. He had us write an essay for every class, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. If there were any grammatical errors, we had to rewrite the essay and hand it in the next class, which meant we were handing in TWO essays that class! We learned very quickly not to make those mistakes! Any skill I may have for writing—and that includes the homilies I have composed for the last twenty-seven years—I owe to George. He passed away at the age of 90 on Friday, November 14th. He is survived by his wife Anita. He himself published his essays and reflections on the Internet, which led me to do the same. The archives of many of those are still available at [The Eppley Files Archives](#).



Donna Kelly Rego

One of the many women who helped form me as a priest was Donna Kelly Rego, who in 1985 served as the chair of my lay formation team during my internship at St. Malachi Church. Donna quietly witnessed the generous spirit of Jesus in a myriad of ministries and taught me the essential asset of inclusiveness in ministry. Over twenty years ago at a diocesan workshop on ministering to gays and lesbians in the parish, Donna urged the priests and pastoral ministers present to regularly put the intentions of our gay brothers and sisters into the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass. Donna died on November 11. She is survived by her husband Anthony, their three children and six grandchildren. Her obituary in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, [Donna Kelly Rego: Best known for her passion to help those in need](#), is an accurate tribute to one of the outstanding Catholic leaders in this diocese.



Jim Haser, chemistry teacher at Padua and I reunite after 40 years!

Two blasts from the past: a former colleague...

A recent call from a former colleague from my days at Padua Franciscan High School (1962-73), was a surprise and a real treat. Jim Haser was the chemistry teacher and one of several young bachelors, like myself, at Padua in those days. So along with the guidance counselor Ralph Torowski, Jim and I must have had hundreds of dinners together at local diners. That friendship ended when we both left Padua...at least until that phone call. He offered

to drive from his home in Pittsburgh so we could have a Sunday brunch together and reminisce about the past and renew that friendship. We had a great time—almost as if back in the day!

I don't know if Jim was surprised to know the story of my journey, but I was surely impressed with his. From Padua, Jim went on to become a principal and local district administrator for curriculum in a Pittsburgh suburb. After the photo above was taken, we parted promising to get together again soon. After I told other former Padua teachers about our visit, I suspect our next get together will be more than just the two of us.

...and former a student

I saw the audition call on the web, and since the movie version of Agatha Christie's *Witness for the Prosecution* is one of my favorites, I went to the audition. While filling out the required form, a gentleman across the table from me looked at me and asked, "Where do I know you from?" I recognized him as soon as he spoke and replied, "I taught you fifty years ago!"

He was surprised that I remembered him, but no more than I was. Later, during the run of the show several of his classmates from Padua came to a performance, and I was again amazed that after so many years I did recognize them and put names to the faces to boot! I guess those guys made more of an impression on me than I—and perhaps they—had thought.

At the right is "His Lordship" as the judge and Vince as Mayhew, a solicitor.



The Catch— a play about a field of dreams



I was fortunate to be part of a wonderful ensemble cast at Tri-C Metro Theatre Department's spring (2014) production of *The Catch*, a new play by Ken Weitzman. The story was inspired by actual events and set in 2002 in the San Francisco area. It tells of Gary Zipnik, a thirty something who, down on his luck, devises a plan to catch the record-breaking homerun ball and sell it for millions. I played Sid Zipnik, his loving but cynical father, who constantly chides him for his dream-world aspirations. However, I am also somewhat delusional as I ignore my diabetes to the point that I have an insulin shock attack from which he rescues me.

The play hits an amazing twist, when my son, ably played by Matthew Lenczewski, actually does catch that record-breaking homerun ball. But in the excitement he drops it! Back to square one! Does that stop this optimist? No way. With an additional twist or two, the play ends pretty much where it began: Sid: "You live in a dreamland, you know that." Gary: "Love it or leave it. Love it. Or leave it."

It was really fun for all of us. Miss them all!

Updates

- ◇ This past fall, I accepted two English teaching assignments, one at Tri-C's western campus and the other at Notre Dame College of Ohio in South Euclid. Both involved the use of a new textbook and its application in two different courses. Add sacramental ministry in four or five communities a week, a role in another play, and a very slow recovery from knee replacement surgery at the end of May would lead anyone with half a brain to see that the teaching was probably overkill!
- ◇ So instead of teaching this next semester, I will use that time to take courses. Here in Ohio, anyone over the age of 60 can take any course free of charge in a state institution of higher learning. Since music and theatre are long-time interests, I will enroll in the Choral Ensemble course at Tri-C West and a theatre seminar in the Meisner acting method at Cleveland State University.
- ◇ The inevitable knee replacement was performed at Cleveland Clinic's Lutheran Hospital on May 27. Rehab has not been going at all as expected. I will be seeking a second opinion at St. Vincent Charity Hospital after the first of the year since there are times when my mobility seems to be decreasing and the pain increasing. Even the exercise bike can't be tolerated for more than ten minutes. A special thanks to all who have offered help and prayers over these last few months.

A Blessed Christmas



and a New Year of Great Promise