

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

An annual Corpus Christi tradition

The Parish Coordinator of St. Lawrence Church, the Slovenian parish on Cleveland's southeast side where I grew up, invited me to preside at the celebration of Corpus Christi on Sunday May 24th. What an honor!

For forty-eight years our pastor, Msgr. John J. Oman, celebrated the Mass and led the procession in the streets with the Blessed Sacrament afterwards. So it was appropriate that the parish also honored the memory of Msgr. Oman's at that recent celebration.

That alone made this experience one of the most significant of my priesthood, coming as it did on the 20th anniversary of my first Mass. The procession route was shortened, the attendance smaller than in the past, but the devotion of the people was profound and the rush of emotion palpable.



One of four "chapels" at which the Blessed Sacrament was enthroned. Picture probably dates from the late 70's.

Excerpt from the Corpus Christi homily



Fr. Lou in St. Lawrence's Corpus Christi procession.

One of the fondest memories I have as a boy and young man was the Corpus Christi experience at St. Lawrence Church on the southeast side of Cleveland. For days before the celebration the neighborhood around this little Slovenian parish would be spruced up: lawns manicured, front porches cleaned, sidewalks swept, tree trunks and curbs white washed.

All this was in preparation for the procession through the streets with the Blessed Sacrament after the Solemn High Mass. Hundreds would march over four city blocks singing Slovenian hymns, praying the rosary past houses whose porch steps became "altars" of religious statues flanked by flowers and burning vigil lights.

At four stops on the procession route, the Blessed Sacrament would be briefly enthroned at beautifully adorned "chapels," while a Eucharistic Gospel was proclaimed. Monsignor Oman (pastor for 48 years) would then bless the crowd with the monstrance to the peeling of the church bells and a shattering rifle salute from six military veterans.

It was a "cultural thing," I had thought. But it was more than that. That Corpus Christi celebration was a Sacrament. It was a sign of something greater than itself. It stood for something that perhaps I didn't get until years later: that this cultural ritual was a sign of what I was to be – what all of us are to be who receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Eucharist.

*St. Paul tells us that we carry about in us the dying and rising of Christ. This feast invites us to consider again just what being **Corpus Christi** means in our world today.... The beautiful ritual was a public profession of faith in the Eucharist. How much more our **BEING** Eucharist!*

20th celebration looks back, forward

A lively discussion with family and friends reaching back more than 50 years and on into the future of the church highlighted the celebration of Lou's 20 years of priesthood.

Father Don Oleksiak, Director of Clergy Personnel for the Diocese of Cleveland, laid out the challenges of a church with less ordained ministers and more lay leadership.

There was clearly a strong contrast among the guests of what the Church will be facing in the decades ahead. Those guests included friends from grade school, high school, and college as well as former colleagues and family.



That "old gang of mine" returned to celebrate Lou's 20th on May 24 at the River's Edge Conference Center. From St. Lawrence Class of '53: Tony Peskar, twin Maryann Semancik, Lou, and Barbara Supan Crawford.

What all seemed to agree was that we made it through some challenging times in the past, and we're likely to do the same in the future.

A day of recollection: calling seniors to be saints

A lively, multi-media presentation titled "***They Walked by Faith***," offered nationally this past Spring to wide acclaim, focuses on six characteristics of sanctity exhibited by the men and women who walked by faith--both those officially canonized and those whose lives are "saintly."

The idea for this day of recollection grew out of a parish mission developed over a year ago for a parish in Colorado. As a parish mission this theme left much to be desired since in a three night series any opportunity for interaction among the people was precluded by the sheer size of the congregation.

More suited as a day of recollection, "***They Walked by Faith***" became a very effective tool for promoting spiritual growth. "Breakout Sessions" allowed the participants to share stories of the "saints" in their own lives. Time was allowed for prayerful reflection.

Two of these days of recollection are being offered for senior citizens in the Cleveland area at The River's Edge Conference Center Wednesday, August 20, and at the Ursuline Educational Center on Thursday, August 21. Advanced registration is required by August 11. Call 216-267-7207.

Preaching Schedule: Summer/Fall 2008

Food for the Poor preaching assignments unless otherwise noted.

August 2-3			September 13-14	Holy Family	Kansas City, MO
August 4-11	Vacation <i>Shakespearean Festival</i>	Stratford, Ontario	September 20-21		
August 16-17			September 27-28	Our Lady of Mercy	Carrollton, OH
August 20-21	Days of Recollection <i>See the article above</i>	Cleveland, OH	October 1-6	Family Wedding <i>Niece Andrea Semancik and Dave Howe</i>	San Francisco, CA
August 23-24	Queen of Peace	Dickinson, ND	October 11-12	St. Paul	Sellersburg, IN
August 30-31			October 18-19		
September 6-7	St. Michael	Oak Grove, KY	October 25-26	St. Anne	Le Sueur, MN

Biking, acting ~~ energizing pastimes

It is more than a bit of homespun wisdom that *“all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.”* Even without “all work,” play is still an essential element in maintaining a health lifestyle.

So it is not surprising that my days and nights have plenty of play. My saving grace during the day is biking.

My home is just up over the hill from the Cleveland Metro-Park which sports the renowned *Emerald Necklace*, a meandering bike path that winds around the outer edge of Cuyahoga County.

Though the knees are starting to experience the wear of nearly 70 years, whenever the weather allows I can be found racing along a stretch of some 20-25 miles on the western edge of the Emerald Necklace known as the Rocky River Reservation.

Later in the day, if not totally exhausted from the biking, I have been availing myself of the amazing selection of educational opportunities in the area. Cuyahoga Community College’s three campuses offer senior citizens a seat in any course that is not full -- free

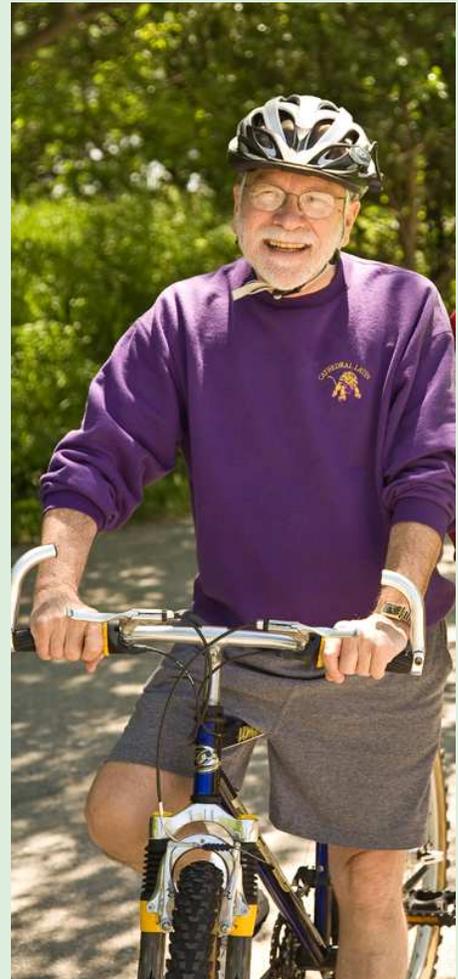
of charge. And I would never pass up a freebee!

So over the last two years I have taken courses in the theater and music departments. The most interesting was Improvisation. Being in a class of twenty-year olds and being asked to respond to the teacher’s “Okay, you’re centipedes!” is more than a challenge. The students were always gracious when helping me up off the floor!

The Acting III course required the presentation of a number of scene studies. After the second one the professor asked, “When you going to retire, Lou. I need you.” There are probably not that many “older” actor types at a community college.

Why the acting and music courses? With retirement looming on the horizon, I would really like to get back to community theater. (I had done a bit before entering the seminary.) I would also just like to be involved in some of the behind-the-scenes workings of theater.

My love affair with this art form can be laid at the feet of Marianist Brother William Behringer, my freshman high school English teacher at Cathedral Latin, who in 1954 intro-

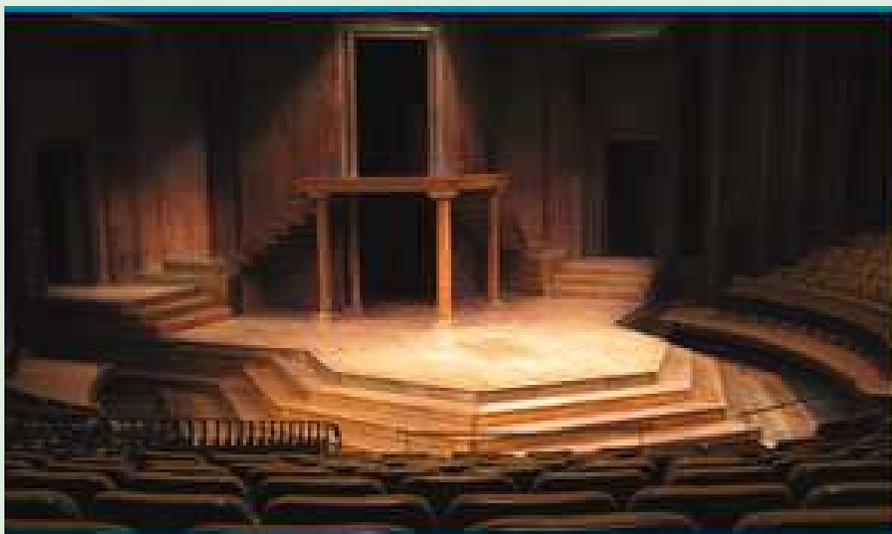


Lou geared up and ready to ride

duced his students to the Cleveland Play House’s Shakespearean Festival with “The Merchant of Venice.” I was hooked! (Brother is now “Father” and the Parochial Vicar at St. Aloysius-St. Agatha Church here in Cleveland,)

That love of the stage often takes me to a good number of the professional productions in Cleveland as well as Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Shakespearean Festival in Stratford, Ontario, where I will be spending a week in early August with a few friends.

These energizing pastimes renew me now and, as I prepare for retirement, I look for them to become, along with preaching the Good News, a way of life.



The interior of the **Festival Theater**, one of four theaters in Stratford, Ontario, home of the famed Stratford Shakespearean Festival.

Food crisis faces the third world

Every indication points to the Third World suffering hunger of gargantuan proportions in the light the current global economic crisis. Fr. Duken Augustin, who ministers with the poorest of the poor in Cap-Haitian, recently revealed in an Email to Food for the Poor:

I think that the situation is more serious than ever. In fact, the price of consumer goods like rice, beans, flour has doubled or more in just 5 months. For instance, from 24 US dols in Nov. 2007, you need now 52 US dols to buy the same bag of rice. This is the same thing for flour, beans, milk, and even building supplies.

Robin Mahfood, President and CEO of Food for the Poor, has said that the situation is desperate, pointing out:

...rice that usually cost US\$ 0.16/lb delivered to Jamaica is now costing US\$ 0.55/lb and rising as we speak.

These messages cannot fall on deaf ears. Jesus cautioned his disciples (us): "Whoever has ears ought to hear." This is a serious emergency. Donations can be sent to Food for the Poor, 6401 Lyons Road, Coconut Creek, FL 33097 or on the web at www.foodforthepoor.com.

Thank you!
Fr. Lou

sabbath retreats

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