



Congregation of the Sacred Hearts United States Province

February 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As a community loved by the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, we rejoice and give thanks for the Final Profession of our Brothers Semisi Pulotu, ss.cc. and Saia Fainga'a, ss.cc.. You may have already seen highlights on social media. Bro. Semisi solemnly stated his commitment on January 2, 2021 at Queen of Peace Parish in Harlingen, Texas and Bro. Saia professed his vows on January 3, 2021, Fr. Damien's birthday, at St. Patrick in Honolulu, Hawaii. I asked both brothers to write about that very special day in their religious journey and following are their reflections:



Br. Semisi Pulotu

knowledge from Fr. Bob, faithful parish families, and friends who live their faith, not just in words but in deeds, too.

In the last six years I have lived a life committed to the vows I professed, namely Obedience, Chastity and Poverty. My formation and education in Tonga, Hawaii, Fiji, and Texas have enhanced my perspectives of the theological and practical aspects of life. I learned how to live a religious life devoted to God through the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. I still very much experience the burning desire to continue in this way of life.

It is my intention and desire, after spending time in

I entered 2020 with a heart burning to serve God and his people. The year offered me a slice of this vocation that I couldn't fully comprehend because I was limited by the academic aspects of this life back in Fiji. I learned through experience how to live my vocation with the people we are called to serve. Even with the restrictions due to the COVID

virus I still gained valuable

prayer and discernment, to continue to serve God, as long as I am able, in the service of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Consequently, I have humbly requested the permission to profess final vows, in which I will perpetually live a life of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience to God and to the Congregation. With God's blessing, the Provincial and his council have accepted my request and for that I am truly grateful.

My life has been fulfilling especially as a religious, oriented towards constant conversion to God, journeying together with Jesus, while the Holy Spirit gives guidance. The precious Sacred Hearts of our Lord Jesus and our Mother Mary, together with the Sacred Hearts family have made me a better person and given me a way life that I would like to live forever. Hence, my Fiat has made me stronger due to continuously orienting my faith on the precious body of Christ and my grip ever firmly on the rosary.

I hope and pray that this new year is filled with God's blessings and love for everyone. I pray we all live lives in which we mirror the love that the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary have showered upon us. May the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary be in each and everyone, and may you all have a wonderful and blessed new year. Feliz ano Nuevo!

On the 3rd of January, 2021, I took my perpetual vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience. In his homily, Fr. Herman Gomes, ss.cc, main celebrant and provincial of the SS.CC, U.S Province, mentioned that professing the vows is one day, but I have to live them every single day. A good reminder and a good challenge for me as I reflected on my life as a temporary professed member in the last five years.

Members of various SS.CC communities in Hawaii attended the mass, together with families and friends. Through these people, I was assured that this vocation must be important, for them to come despite the busyness of their daily lives, let alone the pandemic that is happening here in Hawaii and the world.

2020 was a challenging year for my pastoral, but with the help of Fr. Clyde Guerrero, ss.cc, my superior, God's work and love was still visible to me through my ministry to the school and the parish.

I have said yes to participate in contemplating, living and proclaiming God's love to His people, so help me God and His holy Gospel.



Br. Saia Fainga'a



Br. Bill Gural

And... with praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God, we announce the upcoming Ordination to the Diaconate of our brother, William Gural, ss.cc. on March 6, 2021. The Ordination will take place at St. Joseph Parish in Fairhaven, Massachusetts. Bill will be ordained to the Order of Diaconate by Bishop Edgar Da Cunha. Deacon Bill will assume his new role and assignment at St. Joseph. May his responsibility as Deacon allow him to know the richness of service to our God and His Holy Catholic Church.

With grateful thanks...

Throughout the years our Province has been abundantly blessed with the dedication and excellent work of the good folks who are employed by us. These women and men have served with deep devotion and competence in their respective roles. We could not function without them. As a religious community of men we are constantly reminded of the goodness of God because it is so well reflected in the lives and commitment of our "work force".



With that, we say thank you to Margaret Gray as she retires from her post at Damien Residence and Provincial Administration in Fairhaven. She has served the community for 16 years having been the go-to person for our brothers on the Eastern side of the Province. In her roles as Accounting and Financial Assistant, Human Resources, Personnel Manager and Insurance "guru" (amongst many other tasks) she has done her work always with a smile on her face and so much love in her heart! She now moves on to her beloved role as "Granny" as she and her husband Tom, along with their two daughters Melissa (& Alex) and Jessica (& Mike) have welcomed Elizabeth, Aimee and Gabriel to their wonderful family. We wish her all good things and happiness. She will be missed!!

...and a warm welcome

And with Margaret's departure, we are happy to introduce to our community, Mary Lou Krosschell who will take over the front desk at Damien residence. She comes to us with valuable experience and with Margaret's help and training, a good running knowledge of the Sacred Hearts Congregation. Here is a brief introduction in her own words:



Hello! My name is Mary Lou Krosschell and I have lived in Fairhaven, MA for my entire life. I'm married and a mother of two, a daughter Rylie (21) and a son Seth (28) and I'm also blessed with two beautiful grandchildren, Noah (5) and Everly (3).

I've been in management for over 20 years working in both the private and municipal sectors. I found that working in the corporate world was really not for me. I always wanted a job/career where I could feel like I was helping others in some way but life took me in a different direction for a while. I am very happy that I've been given this opportunity to work here at Damien Residence.

I went to St. Joseph's school from Kindergarten through 8th grade. My family was very active in the church and in this parish so the Congregation holds a special place in my heart and was a big part of how I was raised.

On my first day "on the job" the children were playing outside at the school and I smiled. I felt a sense of coming full circle. I thought this is where my schooling began and this is where I will end my career. And so, I look forward to working with everyone until it is time to retire and enjoy the sunshine full time.

The Region of India

Mindful that one of the mandates at our last Provincial Chapter was that the Provincial Government assist the Region of India to strive to become a Vice Province, we have revised our policy regarding the brothers from India who are working outside of the Region. Our intention is to provide our India brothers with an experience of parish ministry in the US so that in returning to India, they might contribute to strengthening the Region. At our last Provincial Council meeting, with the attendance of our Regional Government, the following policies were approved:



Policy for Brothers of the Region of India
Ministering in the Wider US Province and Congregation
Sacred Hearts Seminary, Danga Dighila – Kolkata January 19, 2020
Approved by Provincial Council November 3, 2020

- ◆ The Provincial Superior assigns a Brother of the Region of India in the wider US Province/Congregation in consultation with the Regional Government and the Brother concerned.
- ◆ A Brother is to remain aware that he is sent by the Region (Congregation) for Mission (Const. #41,3).
- ◆ Within the context of the hosting community (Wider US Province and Congregation), it is to be ensured that a Brother has a strong community and pastoral life with a mentor and spiritual director to help him nourish and live his SS.CC. religious life.
- ◆ A brother from the region who works in the US will normally remain for a period of nine years after which time he will return to India and be replaced by another brother from the Region. If an exception is made for a brother of the region to stay longer than nine years, that will be determined by the Provincial and Council in dialogue with the Regional Superior and his Council.
- ◆ Communication between the Brother and the Regional Superior is to be fostered. When a Brother is on holidays back at home in India, he is encouraged to keep the Regional Superior informed and visit at least a nearby SS.CC. community.
- ◆ In order to foster the sense of communion and belongingness between the Brother and the Brothers in the Region, the Brother assigned in the wider US Province/Congregation is to arrange/plan his holidays to participate in the annual Regional Assemblies at least once in two years.
- ◆ Should a situation of a Brother, assigned in mission in the wider US Province/Congregation, leaving the Congregation arise, a proper discernment and accompaniment process is to be followed, which will include, the Brother concerned returning to the Region of India for a period of discernment.

Formation

On January 3, 2021 a new Novitiate began in Hemet, California. Under the very capable direction of Rich Danyluk as Novice Master, there are five young men discerning their vocation to the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. For Tavite Uluilakeba, Sepulona Lutelu, Gabereli Saunivalu, Marc Roque and Juan Carlos Martinez—this is the beginning! Having been warmly welcomed to the Hemet Community by Brothers Martin O’Loghlen, Jeremiah Holland and Pat Crowley, all are settling in and for a few who have not experienced it before—enjoying the unusual snow in California!. In future newsletters, we will be introduced to the Novices. Pray for a spirit of wisdom and proper discernment!



Covid- 19 has affected the travel of our post novitiate brothers. Five of them have completed their pastoral years in different parishes but are still unable to return to Fiji. In an effort to help them continue with their studies and come together as a community of student brothers, the Provincial Council has assigned them to St. Patrick Monastery where Clyde Guerreiro and Herman Gomes have been appointed to serve as their directors. Brothers Darius Amansec, John Sawchenko, Maiki Kamauoha, Saia Fainga'a and Semisi Pulotu will be in "school" with online classes being offered by Pacific Regional Seminary until it is safe for them to return to Fiji. They have immersed themselves into the St. Patrick Community which now numbers 11, and have brought renewed energy, a bit more noise and five extra sets of hands to lighten the workload!!

Chapter Preparation

As was discussed in my January 14, 2021 letter to you, during the months of February and March, Area Community meetings will be scheduled (either in person or by Zoom) to "distill" personal priorities into Area Community priorities. The Area Communities in Fairhaven, Los Angeles, Hawaii and India should each submit 3 or 4 "priorities" to the Provincial Council no later than March 31st. This will give the Council some time to consolidate the input from the Area Communities and get them back to the Areas as the next phase of our preparation for the Provincial Chapter – June 20-26, 2021. We send "kudos" to the Texas area community who have already completed and submitted their proposals.

Development

We continue to work with the help of the National Religious Retirement Organization (NRRO). Ed Popish has gotten the approval for a portion of the grant from NRRO to invest in the creation of a new website. Ed and Sr. Claire Bouchard have also been working on the appeal letters to thank our benefactors and to ask for their prayerful and financial help. Given the "unexpected" transitions of our Development Office, Ed has steadied the pace and rhythm of the office.

Praesidium

Thanks to Kathy, the lion's share of the work falls on her desk as we continue to work towards our 5-year Accreditation with Praesidium. An important aspect of one of the Standards is the documentation of abuse prevention training. We are in the process of setting up an agreement with Virtus so that our brothers in active ministry will participate in the "Pathways" workshops and each individual's course completion will be documented. We will let you know the particulars as soon as our access to the website is available.

In addition to ongoing education, Praesidium recognizes the importance of maintaining support and accountability for all Members of the Province, which includes an assurance that the Major Superior meets at least annually with each Member to check on "*how are you doing?*" and answer any questions or concerns that might be better addressed in a one-on-one situation. Under normal, pre-Covid circumstances, this could have taken place in the form of a Provincial canonical visitation but we certainly know that has not been possible.

However, to meet the Praesidium requirements, and to check in with each brother, we have decided to do a Zoom visit . To facilitate this without too much inconvenience, we are suggesting that a dedicated computer be put into a private meeting area at each community house. The Zoom link will already be on the computer and specific times will be set up in advance for each brother to simply go to that designated area and "meet" virtually and privately with the Provincial. We anticipate each meeting would last from 15 to 30 minutes. We will be in contact with you as to a date and time for an on-line meeting with the Provincial.

Properties

There has been on-going discussion concerning all of our land holdings. One of the crucial items we face is our attempt to make our properties income-producing. Martin O'Loughlen and Cindy Epperson worked on a financial presentation both past and present which is a well-researched and accurate picture of where we have been and where we are now. All members of the Province should have received a copy in early December. The presentation was made to the Fairhaven Area Community with the recommendation of selling the property on 77 Adams Street. The brothers in the Area were strong in saying that the property should not be sold at this time offering the following proposal to the provincial council:

We the Fairhaven SSCC Community ask the provincial council to initiate a plan which is both mission focused and inclusive of financial analysis, for the assessment of all the properties of the province to be further strengthened by the provincial chapter of 2021 and implemented in chapter 2024.

The council continues to discuss what we recognize to be a very difficult issue for everyone trying to resolve it in the best way both with sensitivity and fiscal responsibility.

Saint Damien

On November 21, 2020, I recorded a webinar on Fr. Damien of Molokai. It was live streamed to about 130 people- a good number of them on the mainland. For a reference you could watch the YouTube video on the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AW0vr0FW_cM



Celebrating our 2021 Jubilarians



MARTIN O'LOGHLEN	60 YEARS ORDAINED
PATRICK COYLE	60 YEARS ORDAINED
PAUL MURTAGH	60 YEARS PROFESSED
JEREMIAH HOLLAND	60 YEARS PROFESSED
LANE AKIONA	40 YEARS ORDAINED

Congratulations Saia and Semisi

