

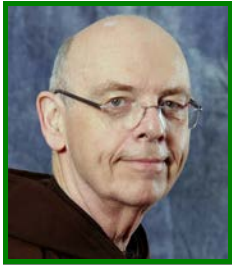


4 April 2018



Issue 1128

## A Message from the Provincial Minister



Michael Sullivan  
 Provincial Minister

April is *National Child Abuse Prevention Month*, an annual observance in the United States dedicated to raising awareness and prevention of child abuse. April has also been designated *Sexual Assault Awareness Month* which is an annual campaign to raise awareness about sexual assault and educate communities and individuals on how to prevent sexual violence.

This month — and throughout the year — we dedicate ourselves to creating and maintaining safe environments within our ministries for children, youth and vulnerable adults. The “Me Too” movement is a recent example that there is more attention being paid to those who have offered us insight into the harm that is done to a person when he or she is subjected to abuse by someone in a position of power and trust. We have learned from our own history just how vital it is to listen to the voices of those harmed to guide in forming our responses.

Since 2006, the Province of St. Joseph has adopted *Instruments of Hope and Healing*. The Office of Pastoral Care and Conciliation, directed by Amy Peterson, helps us to meet the 25 standards that assist us in safeguarding children and adolescents. We have been audited to those standards, and successfully accredited by Praesidium. Amy is dedicated to maintaining the standards and preparing us for our next accreditation.



Amy Peterson  
 OPCC Director

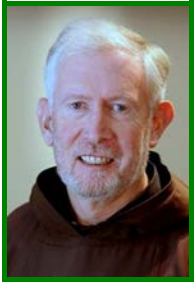
We continue to receive reports by those who have been harmed by one of our friars in the past. We receive fewer as time goes by; however, we strive to meet each person that does come forward with compassion and care, and we do what we can to assist them along their healing path.

As provincial minister I want to take this opportunity to state unequivocally that we remain committed to providing the resources necessary to prevent abuse in ways that mirror our vision, values and mission. The mission and values of the province express an intention of creating a safe environment where individuals are cherished, valued, respected and loved.

Sexual abuse and misconduct are far too common in our world. During the month of April I hope we will all challenge ourselves to deepen our awareness and lend our voices to protect children and those around us who are vulnerable. Let us join together to be a part of the solution and continue to educate ourselves, provide compassion and care to anyone who has been harmed, and remain vigilant in prioritizing the protection of the most vulnerable.

“God is calling us to accept an offer for healing, and to walk with one another along that healing journey...out of the darkness and silence, into the light with voices raised in hope and joy.” (*“Sexual abuse in the Bible,” Evangelical Covenant Church, Chicago IL*)

## A Message from the General Minister



Mauro Jöhri  
General Minister

Dear brothers, it's Easter and I want to send my good wishes.



We know, however, that Easter follows Good Friday. The cross comes first. Jesus embraced the cross until death and then rose again. Have you ever wondered how Francis, our founder, experienced Easter? It seems to me that above all it was on La Verna – when he felt alone and abandoned by his friars, when he was asking himself over and over, My God, who are You and who am I? It was then that he found himself before the crucified, and when he identified himself with the same crucified one. He received the stigmata, and in that moment he embraced both the crucified and his own cross as well. Thus Francis became able to say: You are good, all good, the highest good; You are beauty, You are meekness. This is my hope for all of you, that you do not fear to embrace your crosses, your sufferings and difficulties, because it is by means of them that you will find an experience of Easter in your lives. *Brothers! Happy Easter!*



## April 4<sup>th</sup> 1968: A Day of Infamy

Martin Luther King's death 50 years ago shook the nation, inspired outpourings of grief, rage, and in some quarters, relief. Two months later, Robert F. Kennedy was killed and mourning shifted, the news cycle moved on. In the years that followed, the Lorraine Motel slowly fell into disrepair until, in 1991, it was rescued and reopened as the National Civil Rights Museum. An expansion in 2014 brought in new visitors. And the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the King assassination, coming now as it does in a politically sundered, racially fraught year, should bring in more, with a special exhibition, starting April 4, comparing contemporary events like the

Occupy movement and the Living Wage Campaign with King's Poor People's Campaign and sanitation strike.

What they'll find in its permanent collection is a monument to a movement and, secondarily, to a man, in a display that focuses on difficult, sometimes ambiguous historical data more than on pure celebration. And they'll find, if they are patient, useful information for the 2018 present, and for the future.

My guess is that if Martin Luther King Jr. of 1968 were to return to 2018 America, he would be unsurprised by some of what he'd find: the staggering numbers of black men in jail; the recurrent killings of unarmed black youths by police; the emboldened presence of white supremacy. As a leader, he shaped a great humanitarian movement; as a thinker, he came to understand humanism's deep flaws.

The emphasis of the present-day protest movements is on inclusion: equal salaries, equal education, the right to marry. The goal is to get a share in the system. The civil rights movement began with that goal too, then realized that the system was the problem. King eventually came to this conviction, and in some ways it made the end of his life hard, complicated and unsettled.

The sermon King gave the night before he died was somber and cautionary but also gave reason for hope. "Only when it's dark enough," he said, "can you see the stars."

*(The above is excerpted from The New York Times, article by Holland Cotter)*





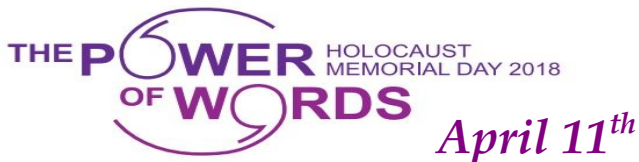
## *Friar honored for teaching immigrants*

John Scherer recently received an outstanding educator award from the McKinley Park Civic Association in Chicago. John teaches English to immigrants *regardless of status*. John is a member of the province's formation team, and lives with the St. Clare Community in Chicago.



John Scherer (right) with Steve Kropp

## *We saw you at the Patronal Feastday celebration in Milwaukee*



Each year, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust chooses a different theme to enable audiences on Holocaust Memorial Day (11 April) to learn something new about the past, and to make it easier for activity organizers to create fresh and engaging activities. Every theme is relevant to the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and to each subsequent genocide, and has the life stories of those who were murdered and those who survived at its heart – as well as the experiences of resisters, rescuers and witnesses.

Words have a mighty power, articulating in writing or speech what is otherwise unsaid. They can reflect thoughts, views and attitudes, and can also play an active role in shaping them. Kind words can take on disproportionate power in times of intimidation and insecurity, where some people are victimized and persecuted. Words used to good effect can restore hope, courage or faith. Words can challenge prevailing views and can state solidarity. Words that are used to ill-effect, when seen or heard, can normalize what might otherwise have been considered too extreme. Harsh words, or words that feed negative stereotypes, can fuel tensions, increase vulnerability and even incite violence.

Today, bombarded with information and relentless social media, we may find ourselves filtering out what we do not want to hear, and are in danger of listening only to what we want to hear – words which can reinforce our own prejudices. Are we equipped to recognize, and are we able to respond adequately to, propaganda? Will our words be backed up by action?

*Let's celebrate Holocaust Memorial Day by choosing our words carefully!*



- John Parker (IT director) recently suffered minor injuries in an accident.
- Carol Rottier, spouse of SLS staff member Rick Voelle, died recently following a long battle with cancer.



- 4 . . . . . **Public Relations Zoom/Video Conference**
- 5 . . . . . **Nicholas Blattner (B)**
- 7 . . . . . **Presbyteral Ordination, Detroit**
- 11 . . . . **Public Relations Zoom/Video Conference**
- 12 . . . . . **Steve Kropp Video Conference**
- 14 . . . . . **Baudry Metangmo (B)**  
**Daniel Crosby (B)**
- 15 . . . . . **Mel Hermanns (B)**
- 18 . . . . **Public Relations Zoom/Video Conference**

***“How to Make Good Friday Great Again”***

by Christopher J. Hale

The cross of Good Friday doesn’t stand just as a distant critic. It communicates to us who God is and who God certainly isn’t. In Jesus, God enters into the fullness of human misery. In the story of Good Friday, we see all of human brokenness on display: greed, violence, hatred, injustice, disloyalty. But we also see that Jesus redeems all of it. He goes all the way down to bring all of us up. No one is left behind.



This is the compelling story of Christianity. It isn’t simply a banners-and-balloons tradition with state slogans and empty rhetoric. It’s a tradition that prompted Christian humanitarian groups to enter places like Somaliland without every answer, but with a passion and a competence to make life a little more just and a little less cold. Christianity isn’t spa therapy that helps us reduce our stress. It’s a human encounter with a human person who endured temptation, suffering, sin and death on the cross to redeem the entire human race.

It’s pretty clear: Easter without the cross is superficial, just as the cross without the Easter is joyless. We need both. The church invites us to undertake the paschal mystery of Jesus, a journey that includes the cross. It’s an invitation to make Good Friday great again. The desert road is uncomfortable, but it isn’t sterile. With Jesus, we can change and be transformed. And with his cross, our Easter joy can be complete.

*The above is excerpted from The Washington Post. Christopher Hale is a co-founder of the Francis Project, which promotes the social justice mission of the Catholic Church in American politics. He helped lead Catholic outreach for President Obama.*