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## REGNUM CHRISTI NEWS OF THE WEEK

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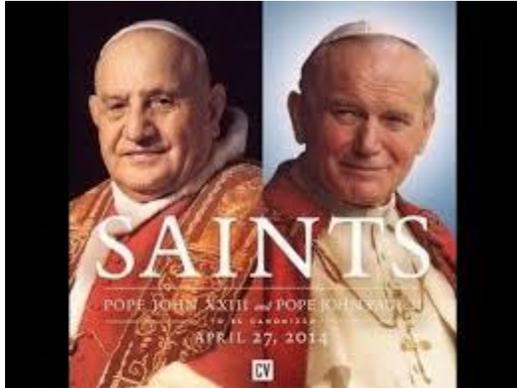
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# Sanctity is for everyone

Regnum Christi Live – April 28, 2014

By Julian Frommling



Once I read a quote, “Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future.” This quote came to mind recently when I read an article about the canonization of John Paul II in which the author was trying to prove how John Paul II really “Ain’t no Saint” because of his failure to control the scandals that plagued the Church in the last decade. I had to laugh just thinking of how unrealistic and idealistic our view of sanctity can be. If we think that to be a saint we have to be perfect, forget it! There would be no such thing as a saint. That is the beauty of the communion of saints. They were all real people; they all had their faults, failings, imperfections, and even their sins! But what made these ordinary people saints was their love! They didn’t even have to do extraordinary things. They were just people like you and me who were striving and fighting for holiness but what made them saints was that when they did fall they got back up and not just once but over and over again. It was their love for God, for others, and even for themselves who God loves unconditionally, that kept them fighting. So the next time you get discouraged thinking that you have to be perfect to be a saint look to God and rejoice because he, in his mercy and love, has redeemed our brokenness, our weakness, our failings, and has called us to be saints with all we are!

## St. John Paul II & St. John XXIII

Regnum Christi Live – April 28

By Fr Simon Devereux LC



Yesterday Pope John Paul II and Pope John XXIII were canonized in Rome. Somewhere in this picture you'll find my brother, Fr Matthew!!

I remember serving John Paul's 2002 Easter Vigil in Rome. He was already weighed down by Parkinson's. After the homily, everybody stood up to recite the Creed. I saw the Pope trying to lift himself up too, but he just couldn't do it. The master of ceremonies came over to reassure him that it wasn't necessary that he stand. Then, I saw the look on the Pope's face which communicated very clearly: "You get me up right now!"

Five months later, I saw the Holy Father again, this time in Toronto, for World Youth Day. I had just been assigned to work in Canada. It was pouring down when the popemobile entered the field for Mass. To everyone's surprise, the Pope had his roof open so that he could greet the young people. He started the Mass soaked with water.

I learned from his example, that a priest has to be close to his flock.

## Catholic Church Welcomes Two New Saints

ITALY | WHO WE ARE | NEWS

***Enthusiastic Legion of Christ seminarians get a little publicity along with Pope John Paul II and Pope John XXIII***

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Legion of Christ seminarians studying in Rome were front and center during the big event this past Divine Mercy Sunday, April 27, 2014.

The seminarians caught the attention of photographers and appeared in photos in articles in the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, to name a few, during the canonization events of our newest saints, Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II.



Photo by Associated Press



Click [here](#) to see the online story in the *New York Times*. Click



Photo by Associated Press



[here](#) to see the online *Wall Street Journal* story.

U. S. A. | WHO WE ARE | NEWS

*Legion of Christ and Regnum Christi members gathered last week to celebrate a new chapter in the movement's history*

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## by Br. Antonio Lemos

On April 22 and 23, 2014, the Cheshire Novitiate and Humanities College (Cheshire, Connecticut) hosted a gathering of all Legionaries in the North American Territory and representatives from the Regnum Christi movement to celebrate a new chapter in the movement's history.



Most of the Legionaries of the Territory arrived on Easter Monday. Fr. Eduardo Robles Gil LC, the General Director, arrived in Cheshire on Saturday evening for the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

On the morning of Easter Tuesday was the first concelebration with a 120 Legionary

priests. More than 250 Legionaries were present, including priests and brothers working in USA and Canada, the humanists and novices of Cheshire, and the apostolics of Sacred Heart and Immaculate Conception. During the homily, Fr. Eduardo mentioned that God is always close to us, but sometimes he is hidden and we need to make an effort to find him.



Fr. Eduardo Gil LC talks with visiting members of the RC consecrated.



That same Tuesday in the morning Fr. Eduardo held a conference and Q&A for all priests and interns. He gave an update from the chapter and the next steps he will

take as general director. He also took advantage of the time to thank Fr. Luis Garza for all his work as Territorial Director in the last years and to welcome Fr. John Connor as new Territorial Director.

In that same morning, Fr Luis held a conference for all present in which he offered an overview of the situation of Territory in different areas, including an update on apostolates, finances, etc.



Siblings Kathleen Murphy and Fr. Thomas Murphy LC



On Wednesday all Legionaries, consecrated men and women, diocesan priests and RC members and friends gathered in St. Bridge's, a parish nearby Cheshire, for the celebration of the Eucharist. During the homily, Fr. Eduardo mentioned our journey has been like that of the disciples of Emmaus. He pointed out how important is

for us to trust in the Lord, because Jesus trusts in us.

After Mass, everyone had lunch together in a nearby hall and more than 400 people were present. At the end of lunch, Fr. Thomas Murphy LC and RC consecrated woman Kathleen Murphy, who are siblings, gave their testimony about this renewal period of the Regnum Christi movement. The consecrated women presented a few songs, followed by the Legionary brothers who also presented their songs.



On behalf of the lay

members, Candy Nesbit gave her personal testimony about her experience with Regnum Christi and the period of renewal.



## One Glimpse and Called by God

Regnum Christi Live – April 29, 2014  
By Br David Parker LC



**"And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."  
(Mk 10:21)**

Late November 2002, I was invited to help at a retreat in Edgerton, WI, when a brother Legionary invited me to make a trip to Rome. Honestly, I had hidden for a while that I had thought of the priesthood, but school, scholarships, acceptance into colleges, etc. seemed to occupy my mind more than anything else. But reconsidering, I thought I would give it a shot.

So much had God done for me and my family, that to make the trip, to step outside of my comfort zone and let God work was a good idea. Problem: No money. At the time, my family was living at the grandparents because we were renovating our home, traveling 25 minutes to school every day. So using the land line internet, I went onto CheapTickets.com to see if there was anything "cheap" to go to Rome during the New Year. Well, the moment we had a shot at a cheap ticket, it was gone. A couple days before, I had just registered for my passport, but now, looking at the cost of the flight, it wouldn't be possible.

Then the moment came. I walked up the wooden steps to the living room to talk to Dad. I told him that the trip wasn't possible anymore. We had no money (I had to find people to sponsor me), and the trip got too expensive. At that very moment, Dad went down the creaky wooden steps to the computer in the basement, asked me to get him to the website for the tickets, and right there and then bought the tickets. In the meantime, I kept trying to convince dad not to do it. I knew my parents could not make a credit card purchase like that. But there was one thing that dad said as a great act of faith: If our Lord wants this to be paid for, He will have it paid for. I couldn't believe it at first, but a week later when the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Knights gave \$500 each for the trip and my aunt gave another \$250 I knew our Lord wanted to make this trip possible. I took \$300 of my own cash to spend. The passport came in 5 days before departure and off I went, the first time outside of the U.S.A. So I get my first experience of Rome...Lost baggage.

So I wouldn't receive my bags until 5 hours later. Good thing I had essentials with me on the plane!

The first couple of days I don't remember much about, except a priest whose tag line for the pilgrimage was "If we were tourists, we would see....but we are not tourists - we are pilgrims". Later I would come to know him as Fr. John Bartunek. We visited St. Peter's, the Scavi Tour (where the bones of St. Peter are), the other great basilicas of Rome, the Catacombs, etc. Honestly, I was having a great time, but the reason for coming wasn't in the forefront of my mind.

That changed on Jan. 1, 2013, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. I had the grace to be a part of the mass. After realizing that we were going to get stuck near the columns and not the center isle of the Basilica, Patrick

Hodgdon (a friend of mine from Minnesota) and I needed to do some evasive maneuvering to get our preferred seating. So, taking a step back to the columns, we let people pass us up in line to fill the last seats of the row and then immediately darted into the next row back to get to aisle seats.

It was there that I realized that I would be within feet of Pope John Paul II, but wasn't expecting that our Lord would speak to me at that very moment. When the Pope entered, I saw him up close, a man bent over in infirmity, barely standing with both his hands grasping the bar of his moving platform in procession. He wouldn't even be the main celebrant of the mass that day. A man of such generosity and suffering, all for his flock.

At that moment, something struck me like a bolt..."and you David, are you generous with God?" It was an instantaneous thought that reached the depths of my heart. Was I being generous to God? I couldn't say no to God anymore or at least ignore Him when it was convenient to do so. I had to respond, and there was a man there in front of me, His Vicar, who was teaching me what this response meant for my life. He said absolutely nothing to me, but at the end of the mass, I really believed he looked up directly at me as if to confirm what was in my heart. I realized right there and then, everything was about the change. Two days later, our Lord allowed me to seal that act of faith in incorporating into Regnum Christi, a step I avoided making for two years.

On January 3rd, I would walk down the statue of our mother, the same one I see every day now here in Rome, and consecrate my life to her, asking her to help me follow this call our Lord was placing in my heart. At 18 years old, I couldn't believe how our Lord was teaching me so much about his love for me, especially through his mother. I stayed with her for a good while. How many times have I been reminded by her of that special day, on her Feast day on January 1st, that she was present with me there also in that mass.

I have never regretted that moment ever. In two days, we will celebrate the Canonization of this great saint, a saint through whom our Lord called me to serve him as a religious and a priest. I ask you all to pray for me through St. John Paul II's intercession, that the generosity that our Lord called me to will continue to grow in my life, so that our Lord may transform my life to be a humble instrument for His Kingdom and the salvation of souls.

# JPII: Asking for Forgiveness

Regnum Christi Live – April 30, 2014  
By Fr Aaron Smith LC



There are some moments that leave a deep impression on life. You would like to go back and live them again. They are in the past but effect the present. The best we can do is learn from them so as to always take a step forward just like the following experience I had in Rome.

“Go ahead!” I looked down the long towering passageway without breathing. My legs started to move as my mind tried to grasp the reality of the situation. Everything went as planned and we turned right going into a small room. “Wait here.” We stopped too nervous to tremble.

People started to gaze at us through the plexi-glass. My mind raced to find an explanation... Just two days before, I was at the seminary as normal when one of the fathers pulled me aside and asked “How would you like to be an altar server for the Pope?” “Altar server for the Pope?” I replied “How can I say no? What an honor.” Satisfied with the answer the father continued “It is going to be the Mass of Pardon where the Pope will ask for forgiveness for the sins committed throughout the history of Christianity.” I could hardly believe my ears. The Jubilee Year 2000 had been full of special graces but it was almost too much.

Now I stood next to the famous Pietà statue waiting to begin the ceremony. “Come on! The Holy Father is waiting!” The other seminarian and I stepped through the door into a small private sacristy just large enough for the Pope, two Monsignors and both of us. Pope John Paul II had his back towards us, hands folded, head bent with his eyes closed as he faced towards a crucifix on the wall. A peaceful silence came over all of us. We stood there looking at him while he looked towards God. No words, no movement, just the silent testimony of a man in prayer. Conscious of his own weakness and necessity, aware of who man is and his great need for God’s mercy. The Pope interceded before Christ for humanity.

As he opened his eyes the Monsignor signaled and we headed out to lead the procession into the basilica. As we turned right to head down the center aisle flashes of light from the press and the packed crowds of faithful blinded me. Little did they know that they had missed the heart of the situation.

Pope John Paul II is a saint not because he was in the spot light but rather because he learned from Christ how to forgive and ask for forgiveness. Fourteen years after this historical Mass of Pardon we are aware more than ever of man’s weakness, his sin and his need for God. Wars, injustice and hate are still a part of our daily lives during this new Millennium. Living saints are necessary who follow the example of John Paul II and pray every day as Christ taught us “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us...”

## **Regnum Christi consecrated women gather for territorial encounter**

U. S. A. | WHO WE ARE | NEWS

*Joan Kingsland and Julian Frommling share their experience*

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*Following are testimonies from Regnum Christi consecrated woman Joan Kingsland, and Julian Frommling, a student at [Mater Ecclesiae College](#), about their experience at the RC family gathering in Rhode Island and Connecticut last week.*



## **Easter Joy, Easter peace**

**by Joan Kingsland**

In the Catholic faith there's time for celebrating all kinds of things.

Last week the Legionaries had a territorial get-together in Cheshire, Connecticut, and we consecrated women did the same in Greenville, Rhode Island, above all to give thanks to our Lord for the blessing of concluding our General Assembly and General Chapter. This included a Mass and luncheon with the Legionaries and other Regnum Christi members in Cheshire.

It was good just to be together. Fr. Thomas Murphy LC and Kathleen Murphy, (brother and sister duo) stole the show with their lighthearted humor and deep reflections. Kathleen's joy at having a brother for a priest stretched beyond Fr. Thomas, standing



Kathleen Murphy speaks to

proudly by her side. Candy Nesbit elicited uproarious laughter from the Legionaries by systematically roasting as many of them as she could. She ended with heartfelt words of gratitude for what she has received through her participation in the Regnum Christi Movement.

the gathering while brother Fr. Thomas Murphy LC looks on.

I appreciated the peace and frankness with which our past was acknowledged while maintaining hope in building the future. There's still energy there, still a zest for building Christ's Kingdom together.

## **Blessed Among Women**

**by Julian Frommling**

There was a lot of excitement during Easter week in Greenville, Rhode Island. All of the Regnum Christi consecrated women from the North American territory, including representatives from the Philippines, were gathered for a "territorial encounter."

I have known many of these people for a long time and others I am with every day, but sometimes I have to be "hit over the head" to realize what a gift and treasure my sisters are. On Thursday night I was hit over the head.

We had an appreciation dinner for all of the consecrated in the territory who are celebrating more than 25 years of consecrated life this year. During the dinner several people thanked each one of them personally, shared stories about them, saying how each of these women has touched their lives in a profound way.

It struck me how much these seven consecrated souls, celebrating more than 25 years of being totally consecrated to our Lord, have had such an impact on so many people's lives.

What struck me even more was how many things they said I did not know - how much love, joy, sorrow, suffering these women have gone through, and lived hidden and in silence with their spouse and king.

As I looked around the dining room at the faces of all of the consecrated present, I suddenly realized what beautiful people live by my side, love by

my side, giving themselves daily to our Lord, their communities,



and the souls God has placed on their path.

As I prepare to make my first vows in the consecrated life of Regnum Christi, I want to thank God for the beautiful sisters he has placed at my side, who have gone before me, who have given me an example of what it means to be a spouse of Christ and a mother of souls, who show me what it means to be a hidden servant in the heart of Christ. I am truly blessed among such holy, humble women. I ask you to pray for me and all consecrated souls that we may all live this hidden service, striving to bring all people to experience the merciful love of God, so that his kingdom may reign in all hearts!

## **Witness to Mercy**

**Regnum Christi Live – May 1, 2014**  
**By Julian Frommling**



For the last several years the Mater Ecclesiae College Choir has sung at the Divine Mercy Sunday celebration at the National Shrine of Divine Mercy in Stockbridge Massachusetts. This year was the second time I have personally gone. Before going I was just reflecting, why do we sing? Why do we take the time to practice? Why do we drive a total of 8 hours there and back during the weekend? But the truth is it is the least we can do to thank God because we, as Regnum Christi, are witnesses and beneficiaries of the mercy of God. It is because of his mercy that we are here. It is because of his mercy that we exist both because he brought us through years of struggle and because he is now asking us to share that mercy with the world, to bring people to his heart to receive his mercy. So why did I sing at the Divine Mercy Sunday mass? To be a witness of the merciful love of God has been showered upon us and has brought me personally and Regnum Christi to where we are now.

## 2014 Mercy Missions

U. S. A. | WHO WE ARE | NEWS

*Mission Youth and Regnum Christi sponsor Holy Week mission events throughout the country*

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In dioceses throughout the United States, families and young people participated in Mission Youth Mercy Missions during Holy Week 2014.

Events took place in the localities of Atlanta, Georgia; Chicago Illinois; Cincinnati, Ohio; Dallas and Houston, Texas; Detroit, Michigan; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; New York City, New York; Phoenix, Arizona; and Sacramento, California.

Following is a sampling of the variety of activities by location:

### **Atlanta**

This year, mission activities in the Atlanta area took place at several parishes during Holy Week. The commissioning Mass took place during the vigil of Palm Sunday April 12 at Mary Our Queen parish in Norcross. Other parishes involved included Holy Cross, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Brendan's, Holy Spirit Mission, St. Joseph in Athens, St. Matthew in Winder and the Carmel Retreat Center, among other locations. A combined 500 missionaries shared their faith with others,

participating in nursing home visits, feeding the homeless, doing building and repair projects based on local needs, and promoting prayer and confession.

This year photographs were submitted from each of the mission sites. To view, go to the RC Atlanta photo page at the following link: <https://rcatlantaphotos.shutterfly.com/pictures/5>.

## **Chicago**

Among other activities, Holy Week missions in Chicago included a five-mile cross walk from Holy Name Cathedral to St. Alphonsus parish. Missionaries also helped to make beds, set up the tables, and feed about 800 homeless at Pacific Garden Mission homeless center in Chicago, reportedly the "oldest, continuously operating rescue mission in the country."

## **Cincinnati**

In the Cincinnati area, the diocesan newsletter, the *Catholic Beat*, promoted local mission events (Click [here](#) to read the article.)

Activities took place from April 16 through 19 in locations in inner city and downtown Cincinnati. Missionaries worked at area charities, held a cross walk and Stations of the Cross devotion, and supported the local tradition of "Praying the Steps" at the cathedral. The commissioning Mass took place Wednesday evening at [Royalmont Academy](#) in Mason.

Photos of the activities can be found at the Cincinnati Holy Week Mercy Missions [Facebook](#) page. Click [here](#) to see a Youtube video of the mission.

## **Dallas**

In Dallas, a group of boys served Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish, and 40 families led an Easter carnival for children, then visited residents at a Catholic nursing home. The entire group of missionaries (boys, girls, and families) enjoyed a lunch break together on Holy Saturday.

According to Regnum Christi consecrated woman Carrie O'Connor, one of the most outstanding experiences during their local mission was

washing the feet of more 100 people who came to the food pantry on Holy Thursday morning. Missionaries waited near the food line, where 1,158 people received groceries. They said to the people, "Today is Holy Thursday, the day that Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. May I wash your feet as a sign of Christian service?"

"Their openness was so humbling for all of us," said Carrie. "We had wonderful conversations with the people who were truly grateful for this unexpected gesture. Almost all of our missionaries had the courage to do this, which was very inspiring to me!"

The young women missionaries provided some testimonies about their mission experience:

Jasmine said: "I didn't know what to expect. It's encouraged me to put myself out there. No matter how little it is, I can make a big impact on people. I don't know if the people will remember me, but I will definitely remember them."

Xochitl said: "I washed the feet of a man who has calluses, and I felt how hard they were compared to mine. These people we were helping have been through so much...I have never come in contact with people like this."

Juanita said: "When I used to see homeless people I would get scared, but now I see God in them."

Nathalie said: "Holy Week is special because I get to walk with Christ every step of the way. God's love for me is greater than my fear."

Carla said: "Coming into this week I was really excited, waiting for the opportunity to get out of the ordinary things and be a missionary again. Being with people who love Christ so much makes me want to love Christ more and be a better person."

Emma said: "I've never been on a mission before. I had an expectation in my mind of what I would get out of it. I didn't get what I wanted, but what I needed. Meeting people, hearing their stories, touched me a lot. It helped me look at my relationship with Christ and what I want in life."

Daniela said: "This mission helped me to remember that I can and I want

to open my heart up to God.”

Laura said: “I came here to get the spirit going again...I’ve been discouraged at home because there’s not a lot going on in the church. I got fired up again!”

Angelica said: “It helped me grow spiritually and in discerning my vocation.”

## **Detroit**

Regnum Christi members in the Detroit metro area held a Family Mission on Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Thursday activities included visiting Mendelson Nursing home in Waterford, Michigan, and conducting a “Stations of the Cross” devotion with the residents.

On Good Friday, missionaries witnessed the live Stations of the Cross event at St. Vincent de Paul parish in Pontiac. They also held an Easter petting zoo for parish families, facilitated special reflection presentations for parish teens, and introduced the Pilgrim Queen of the Family rosary program to parish families.

## **Houston**

Mission activities in Houston included more than 25 families, about 90 people in total. They supported St. Bart’s Parish in Katy, Texas, and knocked on more than 550 doors on Thursday and Holy Friday, inviting people to talks, catechesis, and confessions.

On Holy Saturday, in a day full of “humility and charity,” the missionaries served two groups of refugee children from Catholic Charities at Hermann Park. They played with the children, helping them to learn more about their faith and had a lot of fun!

## **New York**

The Missions in New York City took place in the Soho area, surrounding St Patrick Old Cathedral (one of the oldest Churches in the city and the first Cathedral).

Missionaries representing groups from New York, New Jersey,

Connecticut, and Pennsylvania began work on Monday of Holy Week. At times there 200 missionaries in the Soho streets, an area famous for art, restaurants, and shopping. About 100 young people participated in the missions and had special activities, including a cross walk through Manhattan, living Stations of the Cross in the streets of Soho with more than 500 people present, and a “midnight run” in which missionaries helped to give food and clothes to the homeless. On Saturday, they visited Harlem to play games with the children there.

Legionary priests heard confessions (at times with up to nine priests) at the Old Cathedral. The consecrated women and Legionary brothers assisted with youth mission activities, and the consecrated men helped to receive visitors at the Old Cathedral parish.

Go to the following link to read the missionaries’ blog, where they recorded the main stories of each day:<http://www.loveyourmission.org/2014HWMblog.htm>.

Go to the following links to see videos on Youtube:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVKhD\\_a4n-g&feature=share](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVKhD_a4n-g&feature=share)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Hwm0ZDJ8bg>

## **Philadelphia**

Missionaries met at St. Patrick’s Church in downtown Philadelphia to promote an upcoming Stations of the Cross devotion to people in Rittenhouse Square. They celebrated the Mass of the Last Supper at St. Patrick’s in the evening and then held an event to supply food for homeless residents. On the morning of Good Friday, missionaries prayed in front of a local Planned Parenthood facility, and then held a crosswalk through the downtown area collecting prayer intentions. They stayed to witness the Live Stations event that they earlier had invited people to attend, and then participated in the Good Friday service at St. Patrick’s.

## **Phoenix**

About 15 members of Challenge participated in the Holy Week missions in the Phoenix area. Activities surrounded the local St. Anne’s parish and “accomplished so much,” according to Regnum Christi member Christina Campbell, one of the organizers.

Their accomplishments included:

-packing 51 boxes (11,016 meals) of MannaPack meals for the “Feed My Starving Children” program <http://www.fmsc.org/home>.

-hosting a Stations of the Cross service for children at St. Anne’s for hundreds of parishioners.

-making 12 fleece tie blankets for hospitalized children for the Project Linus <http://linusblankets.org/>.

-assembling 43 boxes of books, toys and games for hospitalized children for the Jared Box Project <http://www.thejaredbox.com/index.html>.

- putting together 40 bag lunches for homeless families for “Save the Family” <http://savethefamily.org/>.

-distributing dozens of boxes of food to needy families at the St. Anne’s ministry “Friends of the Needy.”

-handing out dozens of fliers with Mass and Confession times for Easter weekend in the local neighborhood.

-helping clean and decorate the church to prepare for Easter.

-visiting residents of Emeritus Senior Living of Gilbert and handing out dozens of Easter Eggs that they colored.

## **Sacramento**

Starting on Holy Thursday, 100 teenage missionaries participated in the Holy Week Missions in Sacramento, California. The missionaries participated in “street evangelization” and supported the National Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in downtown Sacramento. They led a four-hour camp for about 100 kids on Saturday.

**Congratulations to all for this wonderful work!**

## **Practical Principles on Sale**

U. S. A. | WHO WE ARE | NEWS

***The online RC Store is offering a sale price on the DVD “Practical Principles of Regnum Christi”***

During the month of May, the featured item from the RC Store will be the *Practical Principles of Regnum Christi* DVD.



Normally priced at \$14.99, the DVD will be on sale for \$7.50. Also, a free PDF download of a study guide for this DVD can be added to an order as well.

To access the RC Store, go to the link on the home page of the Regnum Christi website.

For more information, or to order the DVD, go to:

<https://www.missionnetwork.com/store/category/RCstore>

## A charism of accompanying others

Regnum Christi Live – May 2, 2014  
By Eleanor Seagraves



As thoughts and prayers about our charism continue to churn in my heart, I thought of two stories showing how our charism accompanies individuals and families through the joys and sorrows of life.

**Story #1**

Meet Frank and Jessica. They are a young couple at the parish where I work as the Pastoral Assistant. They are expecting their first baby. SHE is named after a saint, but that's all they will tell me. As Pastoral Assistant, one of the many hats I wear is helping with Baptismal prep class for new parents. So, Frank, Jessica and I met a few Sundays ago to review the Rite of Baptism, picking godparents, and the theology of the sacrament. It was a beautiful moment because during the course of my class both parents were visibly moved at different moments of the teaching, and I was there to witness and accompany them in their awe, not only of a new life, but the reality of that same new life in Christ through water and the grace of Baptism.

The next part of that conversation is what pleasantly surprised me. As I was wrapping up, Jessica turned to me and said, "So, let's talk about how we can get more young couples like us involved in the parish." I didn't come with notes on this one. "Yes, let's talk about that," I said. "What did you have in mind?"

We spent the next 45 minutes brainstorming how to reach out to the other young families at our parish. You see, Frank and Jessica have begun their life together. They are welcoming a little one into their hearts and home this May, and at the very core of things, they are apostles. They are already thinking about how they can bring their faith life into their family life, what traditions they would like to begin, and how to bring others into this same dynamic of faith and family life. Impressive. This is a charism at work, and I look forward to accompanying and helping them to be the dynamic apostles that God has called them to be.

## **Story #2**

Meet the Hurd family. Scott, Susan, and their eight children in order: boy, boy, boy, boy, girl, boy, boy, boy. That's seven boys and one girl in case you lost count, the youngest being 10 years old.

On March 31, I attended Scott's funeral Mass. He was diagnosed with cancer about six months ago and it progressed rapidly. It took his life March 27th.

It's hard to describe being there in that Mass to pray for Scott and the family. I know Susan well and I also know Britta, the only girl sandwiched between her brothers. I guess what impressed me the most was the entire

Regnum Christi family that made themselves present for this event. We had two Legionary priests, one who got the last seat on a standby flight into Kansas City, and then got a ride with an RC man who drove him the rest of the way (three hours) to Ames, Iowa, and the other who drove from Chicago. Then we had two Legionary brothers in Chicago who picked up several apostolic boys in Indiana, who knew the Hurd boys, and then there were three of us consecrated women, two who drove all the way from Atlanta in one day, and me who drove from Chicago. The RC members from Des Moines and Omaha were there; one family drove all the way from Texas.

After a funeral like Scotts, I'm convinced that our Regnum Christi family is a gift for the Church. In moments of joy and moments of deep sorrow and grief, we are a spiritual family built up and firmly planted in Jesus Christ. We're not perfect, we're not the best, but nobody can argue that we're not a family.

All of us were faced with the mystery of suffering and yet there was such a spirit of hope, I would say even joy. How can someone rejoice at the death of a man who leaves behind his wife and eight children? We rejoiced because as many put it "Scott can do his mission better from heaven, and he still has quite a lot of work to do." Many friends and family members shared stories during lunch about Scott and the impact he had on them, their families, their businesses.

Scott, like Frank and Jessica, was and still is an apostle. It has been a privilege and a joy to accompany the Hurd family for part of their journey. There are many more chapters to come, but I pray they know how much this family loves them and encourages them as they face the future without Scott by their side.

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