

FAIRHAVEN PROVINCIAL NEWS

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

There is no doubt – attending a canonization in the midst of 40-50,000 people creates a spiritual energy that bonds everyone present to the union of prayer and joy amongst all participants. The canonization of **St. Damien**, along with the four other Blessed took place within the Mass, but it is at a particular crowning point that the Holy Father, **Pope Benedict XVI**, recited the ancient formula of canonization:



“To the Honor of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, for the exultation of the Catholic faith and the growth of Christian life, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own, we determine and define that Jozef Damien de Veuster be inscribed in the list of Saints declaring them worthy to receive veneration throughout the Church.”

The canonization on October 11, 2009 does not end the solemnity and celebration that we share with our brother who is now listed among the saints of heaven. I believe the Congregation sees this as *“the year of Damien”* with ongoing events to commemorate the blessings our Congregation has received in the person of St. Damien of Molokai. Plans are being made regarding a Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC. The date being scheduled is Sunday, January 31, 2010 at 2:00 pm. That date coincides with World Leprosy Day. More information will be sent as plans are finalized.

In all of our ministries, we can make ourselves available for giving talks about the life, spirituality and ministry of Damien. Throughout the year Damien can be included in the Sunday and daily homilies and in the religious education programs. This is a year for continued pilgrimages, whether it is to Louvain, Belgium or Molokai, Hawaii.

In the Vatican liturgical program from the canonization, it describes St. Damien as a voice for *“rejected peoples of all kinds: the incurably ill (victims of AIDS or other diseases), abandoned children, disoriented youth, exploited women, neglected elderly people and oppressed minorities.”* St. Damien, the Servant of Humanity, is a Saint of our contemporary days, a model of God’s unconditional love that we as SSCC contemplate and proclaim.

Fraternally in the Sacred Hearts,

Bill Petrie ss.cc.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In a press release, **President Barack Obama**, who was raised in Hawaii, noted on the day of the canonization of Damien:

“Saint Damien has earned a special place in the hearts of Hawaiians. I recall many stories from my youth about his tireless work with the leprosy patients...he was renowned for treating them with love and compassion. He ultimately contracted Hansen’s Disease and died in 1889. ...Following in the steps of Jesus’ ministry to help the leprosy patients, Fr. Damien challenged the stigmatizing effects of the disease giving voice to the voiceless and ultimately sacrificing his own life to bring dignity to so many. ...We should draw an example of Fr. Damien’s resolve in answering the urgent call to heal and care for the sick.”



President Obama sent a delegation representing the United States that included **Bishop Larry Silva** of the Diocese of Honolulu, **Sister Carol Ann Keehan**, a Daughter of Charity who is President of the Catholic Health Association, **US Senator Daniel Akaka** of Hawaii, **US Representative Donald M. Payne** of NJ, and **Steven Prokop**, Superintendent of the Kalaupapa National Historic Park. Leading the delegation was the new US Ambassador to the Vatican, **Miguel Diaz**.

A SECOND MASS OF THANKSGIVING

The canonization Mass concluded with over 700 SSCC and Congregation friends gathering for a banquet meal. For the Fairhaven pilgrims, there was an evening banquet at our hotel provided by the tour company that arranged our pilgrimage. On October 12, St. John Lateran Church was filled to capacity as **Cardinal Danneels** of Belgium, assisted by **Deacon Ross Dela Cruz**, celebrated a Mass surrounded by Archbishops, Bishops, SSCC and Priests from around the world. Over 2,000 prayed in thanksgiving for the newly canonized St. Damien. On October 13, **Bishop George Coleman**, of the Diocese of Fall River, celebrated another private Mass of Thanksgiving for our SSCC pilgrims in the crypt of St. Peter’s Basilica near the tomb of St. Peter. Bishop Coleman spoke heartfelt words about the Congregation and of Damien and what a blessing it is for the Diocese of Fall River.



BISHOP COLEMAN CELEBRATES MASS AT ST. PETER’S BASILICA

WAREHAM CANONIZATION CELEBRATION



More than 1,000 people attended the celebration, held in conjunction with the canonization of St. Damien in Rome on October 11, 2009. The event was organized by **Fr. Stan Kolasa, ss.ccc** and **Sr. Claire Bouchard, ss.cc.** along with volunteers and co-workers. Children from the local schools made banners, a tent for over 800 people was donated, where Mass was celebrated; Wareham caterers provided food and numerous booths were set up selling a variety of items for those who participated in the full day's events. Fr. Stan wrote an account of the day's celebrations which can be found on the Congregation web page, www.sccc.org along with more photos of the Wareham celebration.



A PERSONAL AUDIENCE



Audrey Toguchi and her husband **Yukio** met **Pope Benedict XVI** at the general audience in St. Peter's Square the Wednesday before the canonization. Audrey was miraculously cured of cancer through the intercession of Fr. Damien. Also present was **Dr. Chang**, a Buddhist, who was instrumental in proclaiming that the cure of cancer was unexplainable in the case of Audrey Toguchi.

Eleven of the nineteen leprosy patients still in Kalaupapa attended the canonization ceremony and were VIP guests.



PILGRIMS FROM INDIA

Frs. Ajith, Subal, and Cristo Das were representatives from India at the Damien canonization. Frs. Subal and Cristo Das also attended the celebrations in Belgium the following week. In India, special Masses in honor of Damien were held in Bangalore by **Archbishop Henry deSouza**, in Kolkata, and will be celebrated on November 8 at the co-cathedral in Bhubaneswar, Orissa by **Bishop Sarat Chandra Nayak**. The provincial visitation begins that day in India. **Fr. Tom McElroy** and I will be participating in the visitation to all the communities in Bangalore, Kolkata and Bhubaneswar.



SACERDOTAL MOLOKAI FRATERNITY



The priests of the *Fraternity of Molokai* are called to fulfill several different missions. Their ministry will try to spread a culture of compassion throughout the world. They will also try to be at the service of all aspects of the human family so as to direct them constantly to Christ. In 1990 in France, **Father Thierry de Roucy**, founded *The Servants of God's Presence*, a group of lay consecrated women, and in 1995 he began the *Molokai Fraternity*. Following the inspiration of St. Damien, they have already established 35 houses in 20 countries. The community starts "*Heart's Homes*" to bring consolation to the most wounded people in the world. They affirm the intrinsic values of every human being through various initiatives in the corporate, scientific and artistic world. Deacon John was present with many members of his community to celebrate with joy the Charism of St. Damien which they have made their own.

He was happy to make his first acquaintance with members of the SSCC Community. So far, none of the Fraternity has been to Molokai. They work primarily in Europe and South America. The three pillars of their mission are: *prayer life, community and compassion*.

ST. DAMIEN RELIC TRAVELS TO DETROIT



The relic of Fr. Damien was brought to Detroit by **Fr. Lane Akiona, ss.cc.** because of the friendship of the former Bishop of Oakland, **Archbishop Allen Vigneron** and **Bishop Larry Silva**, the previous Bishop of Oakland. The relic was brought by Fr. Lane to Blessed Sacrament Cathedral where a few hundred people seeking healing through anointing were among thousands who attended one of five special Masses celebrated over the day and a half that the relic was hosted in the Cathedral, October 13-14, 2009. During the short US tour on the way back to Hawaii, the relic was also brought to St. Joseph's Basilica in the Diocese of Oakland, California. Bishop Larry Silva brought the relic back to Honolulu where a visitation was

made to each of the islands. On November 1, 2009 the Damien relic will arrive from the island of Molokai and will be enshrined at our Lady Queen of Peace Cathedral in Honolulu

SAINT DAMIEN CHURCH

Fr. Jim Kean is the pastor of the new Saint Damien of Molokai Parish in Pontiac, Michigan. He was in contact with the provincial office seeking holy cards before he led a pilgrimage to the canonization in Rome. Although the church in Kaunakakai, on Molokai is the first St. Damien church, Fr. Kean proclaimed his church in Pontiac as the first St. Damien of Molokai parish on the USA mainland. Fr. Kean, who is a great devotee of St. Damien, is filled with energy and enthusiasm and looks forward to a visit to Fairhaven and to Molokai.



PILGRIMAGE ACCOMPLISHED

The sixty-one participants of our Damien Canonization Pilgrimage consisted of people from Fairhaven and the surrounding area, twelve pilgrims from New York and twelve from Artesia, New Mexico. Within a few days of being together, we were all family. The objective was accomplished. We went to Rome as pilgrims seeking reconciliation, having God-experiences along the way, being blessed by the canonization event and returning filled with prayerful thanksgiving.



*To the Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary
Honor & Glory*