

The Associates World

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RIP

**Boston Paulist Associate Henrietta Maloney died on February 15, 2016.
Please keep her and her family in your prayers.**

Recruiting New Members

By Fr. Frank Desiderio, CSP

As I visit different Associates groups, one of the big topics of conversation is recruiting new members to the Associates. This is a great impulse. The more the better when it comes to promoting the American Catholic spirituality of Servant of God Isaac Hecker and advancing the mission of the Paulists.

The questions are how and who. How do we recruit new members? Who do we recruit? I don't think the best way to recruit new Associates is through a bulletin announcement. I think the best way is to approach a candidate one-on-one. A simple conversation sharing your own experience of being a Paulist Associates is how to start. The new Associates Handbook, which was published in December, includes an "elevator pitch" to help you sum up who are the Associates.

As to who to invite, look for someone who already has the innate qualities that mark a good Paulist. What are those qualities? The 2014 General Assembly document *Mission: A Pilgrim Journey* gives us a good description of both the mission and qualities. It says, "Led by the Holy Spirit, the Paulists are a missionary community that forms Catholics for mission, giving particular attention to those beyond the Catholic community. The qualities with which we embody this mission are freedom, joy, respect and understanding, and invitation and welcome, so we may display the love of Christ and his Church to the people we encounter."

Where do we find people who embody freedom, joy, respect, welcome, etc. Likely places to look are:

- ❖ RCIA teams
- ❖ welcome ministries such as greeters
- ❖ evangelization committees
- ❖ small group facilitators
- ❖ Eucharistic ministers to the sick

You get the idea. Look for people who have good social skills and a good heart.

Once you identify a good candidate, invite them to meet with other Associates. Once you have a good number of candidates then it's time to plan an introductory session and see if the Holy Spirit in them sparks to the vision and mission of the Paulist Associates.

Errata: In September we inadvertently omitted Grand Rapids from the list of foundations from where the Lake George retreatants hailed. We apologize to Cathy Hoekstra for this oversight.

Board Member Profiles – Continued

Paula Cuzzo: Realizing Our Connections

In 2008 I was excited to learn that the Paulist Associates were invited to participate in the Convocation in Washington, DC. I wanted to reconnect with Paulists and Associates whom I had met over the years. And I did.



When the Associates gathered for their break out session, I was heartened that I was one of 70+ gathered there who cherished their relationship the Paulists and other Associates. We engaged in lively conversation and recognized our connection through the Paulists. Led by Fr. Frank DeSiano, CSP, then Presidential Board liaison to the Associates, our discernment led us to three key ways we wished support:

1. A monthly newsletter
2. An annual national retreat for Paulist Associates
3. The formation of a Paulist Associate Board

When Fr. Frank Desiderio, CSP, became the National Director of the Paulist Associates in 2014, he re-examined the charge of the first Board, and in conversation with Associates determined that these desires still remain important to the Associates. So after our election Fr. Frank first gathered the Board via Skype, we heeded requests of the Board: re-establishing a retreat schedule, updating the Handbook, and relaunching this newsletter.

My role as the “compiler” for the newsletter is to reach out to the various Paulist Associates groups for their contributions to the newsletter. I ask groups or individuals contact me to volunteer to prepare articles and suggested meeting topics. I along with the other Associates want to know more about you and the way you live out your promises as Paulist Associates.

This newsletter is one pivotal piece of communication. As Hecker sought out new ways to bring the Word to all people in the United States via the Lyceum lectures, missions, and publishing books and *The Catholic World*, we too will explore new ways of staying in touch and strengthening the bond of our common faith and commitment as Paulist Associates. I look forward to more regional retreats, Facebook posts, and possible virtual meetings. I encourage folks to email, tweet, and even send snail mail.

While I cherish my memories of the Convocation in 2008, I am equally excited about forging new connections with the Associates in a variety of ways that will help all of us live out the promises we make.

Fr. Paul Robichaud, CSP: History Reimagined

Fr. Paul Robichaud is the Paulist historian, and is the Postulator of the Cause for Hecker’s sainthood.

Fr. Paul’s connections to the Associates are long established. Each week for the past couple of years, he emailed Hecker Reflections as a means for Paulists and Associates to engage in Hecker spirituality. These communiques offered Associates a short piece from Servant of God, Isaac Hecker, followed by his commentary and questions. We are delighted that some of the Associates use this material as basis for their discussions at monthly group meetings.

Over the years, various Associates groups have invited Fr. Paul to their local foundations where he lectured on Hecker and the history of the Paulists. He’s always open to an invitation to come again or to places where he has yet to visit.

In 2006, the Boston Paulist Associates led a national retreat at Oak Ridge, New Jersey with the theme of the Paulist patron saints. They asked Fr. Paul to begin the retreat with them. He spoke to them about the canonization process and in the work begun on the cause for Isaac Hecker.

2008 was a special year for the Paulists as we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Paulists, and the Paulist Associates were blessed with many opportunities to come together with Fr. Paul.



Associates from Austin, Boston, and Grand Rapids joined on the pilgrimage to Rome he led when we in 2008, where we walked the streets of Rome, tracing the roots of Christian faith and Hecker’s time in the Eternal City. Associates met up again with Fr. Paul that summer in Washington, DC during the Convocation. Some Associates also came to New York for a bus tour of important sites related to Hecker’s life and the founding of the Paulists. In addition he joined the Hecker tour in Massachusetts, giving commentary Hecker’s life with the Transcendentalists. 2008 was a very busy and joyous time.

Fr. Paul’s commitment to the Associates was again very evident as he hobbled up to Lake George (after a small accident) to help lead the retreat for the Associates at the end of this past August. He provided a prayerful insight Holy Spirit as our first spiritual director.

We all look forward to seeing him again when he tours the country with the soon to be published tome on the history of the Paulists.

Proposed Program for March

(This is a suggested format; each group may select another outline or topic.)

Theme: Mercy

Opening Prayer — from *The Paulist Prayer Book*

Prayer Service for Reconciliation, pages 441ff

Passage and Discussion Catalysts

Pope Francis stated in his homily for First Vespers for Divine Mercy Sunday:

"Here, then, is the reason for the Jubilee: because this is the time for mercy. It is the favourable time to heal wounds, a time not to be weary of meeting all those who are waiting to see and to touch with their hands the signs of the closeness of God, a time to offer everyone, everyone, the way of forgiveness and reconciliation. May the Mother of God open our eyes, so that we may comprehend the task to which we have been called; and may she obtain for us the grace to experience this Jubilee of Mercy as faithful and fruitful witnesses of Christ."

In Lent, we are called to the disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. How will these practices inform your focus in the Jubilee Year Mercy?

How do you incorporate the corporal works of mercy and the spiritual works of mercy in your daily life? Where do you see them performed in the Church and your local community?

Closing Prayer

Loving God —

Together we pray to walk in faith and charity,

Ever trusting in your mercy:

You always wait for us, love us.

You have pardoned us with your Blood,

And pardon us every time we go to you to ask for forgiveness.

Let us be renewed by your mercy.

Let us accept the grace of Christ's Resurrection.

Let us be loved by Jesus —

Let us enable the power of his love to transform our lives too;

And let us become agents of this mercy,

Channels through which your Holy Spirit can water the earth,

Protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish. Amen.



Isaac says ...

But does God's mercy dispense no grace outside the sacraments? God's mercy is not tied to the sacraments. . . . [T]he sacraments were instituted by Christ in order that the more precious gifts of God's mercy might be more freely distributed and more abundantly received. Christ alone is the inward reality of the Church, of her sacraments, of her discipline, of her worship, and the Church exists solely for her inward reality-Christ.

(1886, *The Church and the Age*, p. 253)

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL OF LUKE (LUKE 6:36-38)

Jesus said to his disciples: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.



Contacts

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Find us on facebook

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Seeking Feedback and Volunteers

This newsletter was relaunched in response to requests from various Paulist Associates at various foundations. The Board is interested in your feedback and requests for future editions, such as:

- What type of articles would be meaningful, helpful to you and your local PA group?
- Do you want to hear more from the other groups across the country and in Canada about their activities and how they conduct meetings or plan service projects?
- How do groups integrate new members into a long-standing group?
- What news do you wish to hear from the Paulists?
- Other suggestions for topics or monthly columns?

In addition, we are seeking groups to write articles and provide suggested formats for the monthly proposed format for meetings. We know that we will be all the richer for contributions by each group. The Boston group compiled the September issue and the Toronto Associates prepared the January issue. The Horseshoe Bay Associates are putting together the next edition for March.

If you or your group wish to offer suggestions or to prepare a newsletter, please contact Paula Cuzzo at paulacuzzo@aol.com. She will be glad to answer questions and offer assistance.

Upcoming Events

Regional Retreat in Kalamazoo, MI: Friday, April 29 to Sunday, May 1, 2016 Regional

Retreat in Malibu, CA: Friday, June 3 to Sunday, June 5, 2016

Please see Fr. Frank's email of February 1 for the registration form and instructions.

Paulist Associate Promise:

I believe that I am drawn by the Holy Spirit to the spirituality and qualities of the Paulist Community. I have discerned both by prayer and study that God calls me to become associated with the Paulists. I promise that I will pray for the works of the Paulist Society, meet with others, who are also members of the Paulist Associates, for spiritual sharing and formation; and I seek to embody the apostolic qualities of the Paulists in my daily life.

Attentive to the Holy Spirit and faithful to the example of St. Paul and the charism of Father Isaac Hecker, I commit myself for one year of membership in the Paulist Associates.