

PAULIST TODAY



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Paulist Fathers: Giving the Gospel a Voice Today

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President's Message

New year is renewal of God's old promise

What's so "good" about good-bye? Where the "sin" in sincerity? What's so "fair" about farewell? And what's "new" in New Year's?

Wordplay, to be sure. But I would also suggest that to ask "what's new?" is to let ourselves enter

into a paradoxical labyrinth which ends in our gracious God.

A new year? It's like saying, "Okay, let's start all over again."

Annually the Church lifts up a number of times for us to begin

anew: Advent (the beginning of the Liturgical Year), New Year's, Lent (a time of converting, again, to Christ and his way of life).

Here I wish to reflect on ambiguous dimensions of the new part of "New Year's."

"New" can sometimes mean what replaces the old. A new cell phone, a new car, a new battery. Recently I was paging through a year-old copy of *Consumer Reports*, and I was struck by how many "new and hot electronic gadgets" are, now, rather dated, if not obsolete. And some of them are no longer even available.

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Busted Halo® turns 10

Young adult media ministry 'firing on all cylinders'

It all began with a text-based web site in 2001 and podcasts produced in an abandoned radio room in the basement of the Paulist Fathers' residence in New York City.

A decade later, BustedHalo.com, an online magazine for spiritual seekers, attracts some 20,000 regular readers. Busted Halo® YouTube videos have each been viewed by as many as 100,000 people, and every day "The Busted Halo® Show with Father Dave" on The Catholic Channel on SiriusXM satellite radio reaches an estimated quarter-million listeners.

"Of all of the ways the Paulists and the church reach out to young adults, something about this is working, something about this clicks," said Father Dave Dwyer, CSP, director of Busted Halo®, a media and ministry outreach to Catholics in their twenties and thirties. "It's the technology, the tone and the demographic ... firing on all cylinders and firing at the right time."

Father Dwyer, who began his tenure in 2004, said the combination of technology and ministry that fuels



Courtesy Busted Halo®

Cardinal Edward Egan of New York and Father Dave Dwyer, CSP, broadcast live on The Busted Halo® Show.

Busted Halo® is eminently Paulist.

"It has always been an important part of the Paulist charism to bring people back and help them reconcile with the church," Father Dwyer said. "The people to whom that applies these days are those in their 20s and 30s. There is a very urgent need for this ministry in the church."

Busted Halo® grew out of Paulist Young Adult Ministries, founded by Father Brett Hoover, CSP, and Mike Hayes in 2000.

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PAULIST FATHERS
Office for Media Relations
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Photo courtesy St. Luke University Parish

20 years of campus faith

Bishop Walter Hurley of Grand Rapids (center) was on hand to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Cook-DeWitt Center on the campus of Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Mich., with Father Brad Schoeberle, CSP, (left) and Father Don Andrie, CSP (right). The Paulist-served St. Luke University Parish celebrates Mass at Cook-DeWitt as well as maintaining an office, offering classes and hosting meetings for students.

'We count on our gracious God, ever old, ever new'

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How quickly some a great innovation can become passé! So our new year may be as fragile as a new gadget.

And sometimes we Christians can pit "new" (better) against "old" (inferior). This kind of contrast expresses itself in sayings like, "The New Testament surpasses the Old Testament because the New Testament is a message of love while the Old Testament is one of wrath." Strange how the same God can reveal himself in such contrasting ways! But closer examination of both parts of our Bible reveals a lot of mercy and love in the Old Testament and not a small amount of wrath and anger in the New! Watch out for Matthew 23! No, the new has not surpassed the old, but the old has been renewed in the new.

So carrying on this reflection on paradox, we see that sometimes "new" can be inferior to the old. Consider the trustworthiness of an old friend or the coziness of an old pair of shoes ("Ooh, they feel so comfortable!"). My old spouse? Yes, she/he is the best and precisely because there can be something so reassuring about the steadfastness of a faithful companion. And what wine does not improve with age? (Not so with milk, of course.)

And so with Advent, now echoed in our secular calendar's New Year, we have been given a year, a new year. The Church, in speaking about the year that we mark with Advent, calls it a "year of grace." Why? Because we can count on our gracious God, ever old yet ever new, ever dynamic and ever my secure rock, to do the same old, the same new thing: to offer before us – both in our future and before our eyes – the graciousness of living with God's steadfast protection. The one who brought us into existence maintains us there and promises to be our future as well as our past.

So this New Year our gracious God renews a promise to be the faithful God, revealed in the Old Testament, the Hebrew



PT/Stefani Manowski

Paulist President Father Michael B. McGarry (front) poses with the Paulist pastors, directors and superiors during their last meeting Nov. 11 at St. Paul's College in Washington, D.C.

Scriptures, and again revealed anew with Jesus, and made real in our lives today.

And that may be what this New Year is about: renewing our connection with the God who faithfully accompanies us on the journey. Our Paulist mission, ever old and ever new, beckons us to God's year of grace.

And let us pray for/with one another.

Father Michael B. McGarry, CSP
President of the Paulist Fathers



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Comfort ZONE

New book by Father Brett Hoover, CSP,
explores the meaning of true comfort

By Stefani Manowski

A fabulous house. A closet full of clothes. Even macaroni and cheese.

They all can bring about a sense of comfort, but is that comfort deep and lasting, or shallow and fleeting?

Paulist Father Brett Hoover explores all these questions and more in a new book titled, *Comfort (the book) An Atlas of the Body and Soul*.

"Comfort is a human need, physical and emotional," explained Father Hoover. "We can easily get too caught up in the elementary forms of creature comforts. Those are good, but too great a quantity can be too distracting from greater, deeper comforts in life – our relationships and spiritual comfort."

Part autobiography, *Comfort* is the story of Father Hoover "asking everyone I came across" what comfort meant to them, and the stories shared in the book are touching and often humorous.

"I asked a homeless guy in the park, the clerk at the 7-11," he said. "That was the best part of doing this book. It made me realize how much of a human need this is."

The idea for *Comfort* partly came to Father Hoover when he was a new priest ministering at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle in New York City at the turn of the millennium.

"People in the '90s had all of this material wealth, yet they weren't happy," said Father Hoover, 44.

Then 9-11 struck, "and people were very quickly talking about what God had to say in the middle of that. God had rescued them because they stayed home from work that day or they had gone to Starbuck's. That is very nice for them, but what does it say about the people who didn't make it? We have an easy notion of causality, and come to quickly to an answer as to what spiritual comfort is. We are too quick to talk about what is God's will."

Father Hoover – who studied psychology as an undergraduate at the University of California at Santa Barbara and theology at the Washington Theological Union in Washington, D.C. and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif. – wants readers to take away two fundamental concepts from the book. The first is the importance of relationships.

"Especially in a society that has a lot of factors that isolate us, one of the most important comforts in life is our



PT/file

Creature comforts are okay, but can sometimes distract us from the deeper comforts in life, such as our relationships and spiritual comfort. Father Brett Hoover, CSP, explores this concept and more in his new book titled, *Comfort (the book) An Atlas of the Body and Soul*.

connection to other people," he said.

The second concept is that spiritual comfort doesn't come easy.

Spiritual comfort is really important and harder than we think," Father Hoover said. "This is God for grown ups. Our understanding of God progresses as we grow. We might start with a very harsh idea of God, and then come to the understanding of a merciful God. But then that understanding can give way to a "too comfortable God," as sociologist Christian Smith puts it, a kind of mix of a butler and a therapist. It is not very fulfilling."

Father Hoover wanted to share a bigger spiritual message about comfort through the book, a faith message that is for more than us Catholics.

"We believe in death and resurrection, and that experiences and sufferings can be transformative ... not necessarily bad for us," he explained. "But not every body is prepared for that kind of reasoning."

A national ad campaign during Advent invited inactive Catholics to come home to the Church. The commercials, sponsored by a nonprofit group called Catholics Come Home, gently encouraged the viewer to give the Church another look. But are parishes prepared to receive returning Catholics back with open arms? How do returning Catholics find a comfortable, nonjudgmental way back to the church? Lent is the perfect time, but how do parishes prepare to welcome back their brothers and sisters during this season of forgiveness and redemption?

Landings is the answer. Landings is a Paulist reconciliation ministry that reaches out to Catholics who want to return to the church while also empowering parish laity to welcome them home. Landings is a small group process that takes place over 8-10 weeks, and has a record of success in six countries and more than 100 parishes and diocese in the United States in its more than 25 years of existence.

"Landings is very simple," said Anna LaNave, the ministry's director. "All it requires is committed people who are willing to share their faith, what being Catholic means to them. It is very easy for people to become Landings parish leaders, and it is low stress, while life changing for the welcomers as well as the returnees."

The Landings introduction kit includes a new training DVD to help parishes train their teams of active welcomers and a coordinator guide that explains how to run and market the ministry, including a 3-minute video parishes can post on their web site that explains the ministry to interested returnees.

The facilitator guide explains the format and schedule for meetings, while the new participant journal provides all with well thought-out weekly reflection topics and discussion questions. The journal allows returning Catholics to chronicle their Landings experience.

"It is an easy way for participants to prepare for the meetings, and can turn in to a spiritual keepsake because they can go back and look at it again and again," Mrs. LaNave said. "This is reaching out beyond the parish walls to find the people who aren't in the pews."

Since Ash Wednesday is the most popular day for people who haven't been practicing to come to church, according to Mrs. LaNave, Lent is the perfect time for parishes to market a spring session of Landings to Catholics who only come to Mass a few times a year.

"People who haven't been practicing who come on Ash Wednesday may be more open to Landings, and parishes will reach people who have been away for a while," she said. "It is the perfect time to reach people who are ready to recommit to the church."

Mrs. LaNave and her staff are busy preparing for a national relaunch of the Landings in the fall of 2012 to coordinate with the Synod for the New Evangelization to be held in October in Rome.

"This is going to be a great year for Landings, and a great opportunity for people who want to come home to the church, but are a little afraid, to find parishes ready to greet them and welcome them home," said Mrs. LaNave.

For more information on Landings and to see their new marketing video, go to www.paulist.org/landings.

Lent is the perfect time to help returning Catholics make

Softla



Photo courtesy St. Thomas More Newman Center

Landings team and participants from the St. Thomas More Newman Center in Columbus, Ohio

Paige Phillips, junior at The Ohio State University

I got involved with Landings because I had stopped going to Mass and wanted to remember what it felt like to love going to church again. Everyone involved was so kind and welcoming, and I truly believe that the spirit of God was present in this experience. Landings was life-changing, and it helped me to find myself in the mess of college. I feel so blessed that this program has helped me find a way back.

Ana Berríos Allison, Landings leader

Through the listening and sharing of our life experience, Landings created healing opportunities and a safe place to explore our questions. Each Tuesday, we experienced communion as we broke ourselves [down] and became one in the giving and receiving of our stories. It is recognizing that God loves us and searches for us to give us life and life in abundance!

Landings

Novice notes

Mark Alblinger gives an update on his Paulist experiences

Paulist novice Mark Alblinger is a former high school teacher from Titusville, Fla., who first encountered the Paulists when a Paulist mission preacher came to his parish in 2005.

Mr. Alblinger is now preparing for his first hands-on ministerial experience by spending his Lenten apostolate at Old St. Mary's in Chicago and will begin his academic requirements for priestly ordination at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., this summer. He talked to *Paulist Today* about his novitiate experience thus far, and all the future has to hold.

How would you describe your novitiate experience so far?

My life has become a whirlwind in that I have traveled across the United States, learned the complete history of the Paulists and am now preparing myself to spend two months in Chicago and start classes [at The Catholic University of America] in the summer. I have not been in a classroom for more than 10 years or so; I am not lying when I say this concerns me a tiny bit! But everyone here has been marvelous and supportive.

What has been the best part of your experience?

The best part of my experience involves two areas: meeting people and traveling. I have met some of the most intelligent, kind-hearted and interesting people here at St. Paul's and in Washington, D.C.,

What have some of the challenges been?

Personally, my biggest challenges have been getting into a routine, and just figuring out where I am in the city. We awake at 7:45 for morning prayer and down the road, classes at



PT/file

Paulist novice Mark Alblinger

CUA this summer. Before I arrived here, my normal wake-up time was around 10 a.m. As far as getting around in Washington, the first couple of months were quite daunting; driving is rather scary until you know that there are no specific patterns to traffic and that practice is your best friend.

What is something about the novitiate that was unexpected for you?

I think I have become a lot more outgoing since coming here. I have always tended to be on the quiet side, but for some reason – or maybe reasons – which I cannot identify, I feel much more secure in suggesting ideas, helping others and voicing some type of opinion.

You are soon heading out for your Lenten apostolate in one of the Paulist parishes or centers. What are you most looking forward to in this experience?

Going to Old St. Mary's in Chicago and actually living there for two months definitely appeals to me. Both of my parents were from central Illinois, and I can attest to the notion that folks from this part of America are very kind, down home and have a knack for making one feel at home. By living at Old Saint Mary's and seeing the day-to-day operations, meeting new people and taking some responsibilities on myself – that is the ultimate on-the-job training program. Also, I love the simplicity of Midwest cooking – meat and potatoes! And I would enjoy seeing the Blackhawks play live, though I hear that's a tough ticket to get.

Coming to a parish near you!

Novices go hands-on by serving Paulist parishes and centers during Lent



Mark Alblinger will serve at Old St. Mary's, Chicago



Matthew Berrios will serve at St. Peter's, Toronto, Canada



Ryan Casey will serve at the St. Thomas More Newman Center at The Ohio State University, Columbus



Steve Petroff will serve the Church of Santa Susanna, Rome, Italy



Stuart Wilson-Smith will serve at St. Austin Church, Austin, Tex.



Courtesy Busted Halo®

Father Dave Dwyer, CSP, answers a question while broadcasting The Busted Halo® Show live on location.

Ministry grows over a decade

Continued from Page 1

A year later, the first version of the website was launched, and young adult focus groups came up with the name “Busted Halo.”

The motivation behind the name? According to the site itself, “Catholic Christian belief is that all God’s children are ‘saints in the making.’ Everyone is called to aspire toward the holiness and selflessness of a Mother Teresa or Saint Francis. At the same time we are all too often aware that this journey toward sainthood is one fraught with imperfections, struggles, and mistakes. Each of us sports a Halo that is either dented, scratched, tarnished ... in some way Busted. Yet God loves us anyway and continually calls us to bang out the dents and polish our halos up to a nice golden shine.”

Things continued to progress, with 2005 bringing a site redesign (complete with advertisements) and podcasts hosted by Father Dwyer and Mr. Hayes. The podcasts are still recorded and produced in the old studios of WLWL, the former Paulist radio station, which were built in 1931.

“We had an unused radio studio right here in this building,” said Father Dwyer, who was a director

and producer for MTV and Comedy Central before entering the Paulist novitiate. “It is wonderful to stand on the shoulders of the giants who have gone before us in media ministry.”

Those podcasts were the genesis

‘There is a force that is driving us, and that force is the Holy Spirit.’

—Father Dave Dwyer, CSP

of a daily, three-hour talk show that’s broadcast all over North America. Sirius Satellite Radio was working with the Archdiocese of New York to develop programming for a new Catholic Channel.

“We sent over some recordings of previous podcasts, hoping they would put them on at 2 a.m. just to fill time,” recalled Father Dwyer. “But to my surprise, they told us that our show was exactly what they were looking for.”

So much so that, for the last five years, Father Dwyer has been hosting a live radio talk show every weekday from 7-10 p.m. ET on SiriusXM Channel 129.

The second half of the decade has

produced more successes, including the first work to be published under the “Busted Halo Books” imprint of Paulist Press, *Googling God: The Religious Landscape of People in Their 20s and 30s*, written by co-founder Mike Hayes; awards from the Catholic Press Association and Associated Church Press, including “Best-in-Class Website”; iPod retreats offered through iTunes; receiving grants from foundations including the Carnegie Corporation and the Catholic Communications Campaign; partnering with the National Catholic Young Adult

Ministry Association and the National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management on mutually beneficial projects.

To mark its milestone 10th anniversary, Busted Halo® is hosting a fundraiser gala dinner on March 8, 2012, at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle in New York with guest of honor and keynote speaker Cardinal Edward M. Egan.

As for the future, Busted Halo® Ministries seems poised to continue to run on all cylinders to further success.

“There is a force that is driving us, and that force is the Holy Spirit,” Father Dwyer said.

Providing for the future

*EWTN's Joan Lewis tells
why will bequests are so important*

Joan Lewis was living in Rome, faithfully reading the Herald Tribune for religious services in English, but none were listed.

"I thought, 'They just don't have this,' until someone I knew asked me if I knew about Santa Susanna," said Joan, the Vatican bureau chief for EWTN.

So she tried out Santa Susanna, a historic church that serves the American community in Rome. The parish came under the pastoral care of the Paulist Fathers in 1922.

"It became my parish, and that was 30 years ago," said the suburban Chicago native. "The Paulists I first met were very welcoming and energetic. They seemed to know how to be everything to everyone."

A French teacher turned Catholic journalist, Joan was put to work right away, editing the 1982 version of *As Romans Do*, a guidebook for Americans exploring or moving to Rome. She has also served in parish ministry, and currently serves as parish council president.

Joan has come to know the Paulists well over the years – the community's history, charism and its individuals.

"Each Paulist puts his own personality stamp on the parish," Joan said. "That is powerful, and attracts them to us [the parishioners] in different ways. They make Santa Susanna a wonderful parish, and I know how hard it is to make a wonderful parish."

Because of her rich and rewarding experiences with the Paulists, Joan has included the community in her will.



PT/Bruce Byers
Joan Lewis

"We all need to be modern day missionaries, especially with the secularism and relativism in the world," she explained. "We need priests who are sure in their ministry, active in their outreach and joyful in their faith. The Paulists do all of this, and do it with excellence."

With her bequest, Joan is making sure others have the opportunity to make their faith grow or even maintain their roots in the church.

"If there is a future special project or other needs in the Paulist community, it is my desire to help with that through my will," she said. "There is a great commitment in keeping the parish doors open. My will bequest is important to the future of the Paulists and a permanent way in which the ministry I know will continue. My family in Rome is Santa Susanna."

To find out more about will bequests or other forms of giving to the Paulist Fathers, log on to www.paulist.org/give or call 1-800-472-8547.

Save the Date!

FOURTH ANNUAL PAULIST OPEN
June 8-9, 2012 • Knoxville, Tennessee
Willow Creek Golf Club • The Oliver Hotel
Registration begins Feb. 1 at paulist.org/golf