



A NEWSLETTER FOR THE PROVINCE OF ST. PHILIP THE APOSTLE



Three of the sixteen jubilarians of 2025: Frs. George Hanna, John Blanco, and Tom Gwozdz, SDBs
Credit: Andrea Zimmerman, Vicky Weekley, and Julia St. Clair

The SUE Province's Jubilarians of 2025

By Fr. Mike Mendl, SDB

(New Rochelle, NY – September 10) – On Thursday, September 11, the SUE Province will celebrate 16 confreres who have 25, 40, 50, 60, 70, 75, and 80 years of religious profession and/or ordination. The jubilarians will be honored with a Mass at the National Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Stony Point, N.Y., at 4:00 p.m. ET. A dinner reception will follow at Town & Country Caterers in Congers, N.Y.

The most senior member of the province (97 years old), **Fr. Enzo Trigatti**, on August 16 achieved the

rarity of **80 years** as a professed Salesian and thus heads the roster of sixteen. Fr. Enzo made his first profession in 1945 at Chieri, Italy. He was born in Zompicchia di Codroipo (Udine province) in 1928 and began his Salesian formation at Bagnolo (Cuneo) in 1943. He was ordained at Bollengo (Turin) in 1956. In Italy he engaged in teaching and pastoral work, was vocation director, and for 23 years assisted with secretarial work at the Generalate. He came to Montreal in 1996 and ministered at Maria Ausiliatrice for 9 years. Since 2015 he has been assistant pastor in Etobicoke,

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ministering particularly to the Italian population.

Not very far behind Fr. Enzo is **Fr. Jan Bernas**, professed for **75 years**, since August 16, 1950. He was born in 1930 at Oswiecim, Poland, home of the Salesians' first work in that country, and made his novitiate and first profession at Kopiec. He was ordained in Krakow in 1958. After 23 years of ministry in his native land, he offered himself for Project Africa and was sent to London to learn English. Then he went to Zambia in 1984, serving for 8 years as a director and parish priest. He keenly promoted vocations and is proud to have had some success. After a few years back in Poland, in 1997 he came to a Polish nursing home in Woodbridge, N.J., to serve as chaplain. After retirement, he has remained in residence there. He's the third-oldest confrere in the province.

Two novitiate companions hold the distinction of **70 years** professed:

Frs. John Blanco and **George Hanna**. They made their first profession on Sept. 8, 1955, at Newton, N.J. Fr. Blanco is the second-oldest confrere in the province, born in New Rochelle in 1930. He's a member of that city's sports hall of fame. He starred in baseball at Manhattan College before going to Newton as a Son of Mary in 1953. He was ordained in Turin in 1964. He has taught or administered in schools in Haverstraw, Marrero, Ramsey, New Rochelle, and Paterson, been a parish priest in Manhattan and Port Chester, and served as treasurer in Columbus, East Boston, and New Rochelle. Since 2017 he's been in Ramsey, still doing priestly ministry.

Fr. Hanna, a few years younger than Fr. John—"only" 91—is still active as associate pastor in Harvey, La. He was born in Pawtucket, R.I., and became a Son of Mary at Newton in 1953. He was ordained in Rome in 1966. As a young Salesian, he taught in Haverstraw and Beirut; as a priest, he has engaged in vocation ministry and an abundance of parish ministry: Paterson, Elizabeth, Harlem, Orange, and Washington, D.C., before going to Harvey in 2014.

A trio of confreres were celebrating **60 years** of profession: novitiate, college, and theology classmates **Frs. William Ferruzzi** and **Timothy Ploch**, and **Fr. Joseph Vien Hoang**, whose vocation followed a more radical trajectory. All made their first profession on August 16, 1965.

Frs. Ferruzzi and Ploch professed at Newton and were ordained in Westerville, Ohio, in 1976. Fr. Joe Vien, as he's usually called, professed



*Frs. Enzo Trigatti, Jan Bernas, William Ferruzzi, Tim Ploch, Joseph Vien Hoang, and Jim Heuser, SDBs
Credit: Frs. John Puntino, Mike Mendl, and William Ferruzzi, SDBs*

at Hong Kong. After immigrating to the U.S. in 1979, he was ordained in Columbus in 1983.

Fr. Ferruzzi, born in Boston in 1947, was raised in Revere, Mass., and was in the first freshman class at St. Dominic Savio H.S. before going to Ipswich as an aspirant. He has been director of communities in New Rochelle (twice), Columbus, and Tampa besides teaching at Cedar Lake, New Rochelle, East Boston, and Goshen. He was a formator in South Orange and CYM at the Boys & Girls Club of East Boston. He's now on the staff of the Marian Shrine in Haverstraw.

Fr. Ploch had a Salesian link from birth because his mother had gone to Mary Help of Christians Academy in North Haledon. He was born in Paterson, N.J., in 1946 and began his own Salesian experience as an aspirant at Haverstraw. He moved with the aspirants to Goshen in 1961 and entered the novitiate in 1964. He served initially in schools: Cedar Lake, Goshen, Ramsey, and Miami. He was also director in Columbus, Port Chester, and New Rochelle. He was provincial in New Rochelle (1991-1997) and also in San Francisco (2009-2014), the latter term interrupted when the 27th General Chapter elected him

regional councilor for Interamerica. His happiest ministry, though, has been as a parish priest in Port Chester for 10 years between his terms as provincial, and now in Chicago.

Fr. Joe Vien was born at Trung Dong, Vietnam, in 1946 and made his novitiate at Dalat. He taught in Vietnam and at New Rochelle and Marrero. He was parochial vicar in Harvey, La., for 12 years and has been parochial vicar since 2012 in Port Chester, where he's also the delegate for the Salesian Cooperators.

Fr. Thomas Gwozdz has the distinction of having been ordained by a canonized saint, viz., St. Paul VI. That was 50 years ago, on June 29, 1975, in Rome as part of the jubilee year, following theological studies at the Josephinum in Worthington, Ohio. He was born in 1940 in Springfield, Mass., and went to Newton in 1962 as a Son of Mary. He professed in 1964. He earned a PhD in philosophy from Fordham in 1996 and taught at Don Bosco College (Newton), the Josephinum (Columbus), and St. Benedict's Seminary (Louisiana). He also taught at Ramsey and has been



*Frs. Richard Crager, James Mulloy, Steve Shafran, James Berning, Alain Leonard, and Krzysztof Nizniak, SDBs
Credit: Fr. Mike Mendl, SDB, Tony Powell, and Fr. Krzysztof Nizniak, SDB*

a parish priest in Port Chester and chaplain for the Salesian Sisters in Newton. He's now retired at Tampa's St. Philip the Apostle Residence.

Fifty years professed this year is **Fr. James Heuser**, who made his first profession on Sept. 1, 1975, at Newton. He was born in Brooklyn in 1955, was an aspirant at Goshen, and was ordained in Columbus in 1984. He taught at Goshen and DBT Boston, was vocation director, vice provincial, and master of novices, director at South Orange and Ramsey, and Eastern Province provincial from 2003 to 2009. Since 2021 he has been president of Salesian H.S. in New Rochelle.

Another trio were ordained 40 years ago: **Frs. Richard Crager, James Mulloy**, and **Steve Shafran**. Frs. Crager and Mulloy began their Salesian life together as Sons of Mary in Tampa, professed together at Newton in 1978, and were ordained on May 18, 1985, in Columbus. Fr. Shafran, on the other hand, graduated from Don Bosco Prep in Ramsey, went to Newton as a Son of Mary in 1974, and professed there in 1976. All three studied theology at the Josephinum, but Fr. Shafran's first

three years were at the Ukrainian seminary in Rome under the auspices of the UPS, and he was ordained in the Ukrainian Rite at Philadelphia on May 5, 1985.

Fr. Crager was born in Parsons, Kan., in 1952 and has taught at Ramsey, Goshen, Marrero, and DBT Boston and served in the Boys & Girls Clubs in Columbus and East Boston. After some years as assistant pastor in Elizabeth, he has most recently served as treasurer in New Rochelle and currently in Tampa.

Fr. Mulloy was born in Gary, Ind., and raised nearby in Merrillville. He has always been a schoolman, teaching in Tampa, DBT Boston, New Rochelle, and now Ramsey. He was director in Tampa and was briefly a formator in Orange.



Fr. Shafran was born in Passaic, N.J., in 1956. In addition to teaching at East Boston, New Rochelle, and Marrero, he has served as a vocation director and director of communities in Columbus and Ramsey and was the founding president of Don Bosco Cristo Rey in Takoma Park, Md. He earned a PhD in education from the University of San Francisco in 1994. He was a provincial councilor for 9 years, provincial for 2 years, coordinator

of the Marian Shrine for 7 years, and now teaches at Cristo Rey Tampa.

Fr. James Berning and **Alain Leonard** made their first professions 40 years ago, on August 25, 1985. Fr. Berning professed at Newton after novitiate there, and Fr. Leonard in Sherbrooke after novitiate in that house.

Fr. Berning was born in 1957 in Lincoln's hometown, Springfield, Ill., and was a prenovice in Marrero. After ordination in Columbus in 1993, he has had a varied ministry. He taught at Marrero, was a parish priest in Port Chester, Washington, D.C., Etobicoke, and Chicago, was a formator in Orange and director in Marrero, coordinated retreats in Haverstraw, and served as vocation director in Canada. He was recently assigned to the Don Bosco Cristo Rey community in Maryland.

Fr. Leonard has spent almost his whole life in Sherbrooke, where he was born in 1964, attended Seminaire Salesien (now Le Salesien) and university, and did part of his theology. He completed theology at the UPS in Rome but was ordained in 1993 in Sherbrooke. At Le Salesien as a cleric and a priest, he's ministered as a teacher, treasurer, director, and school chaplain.

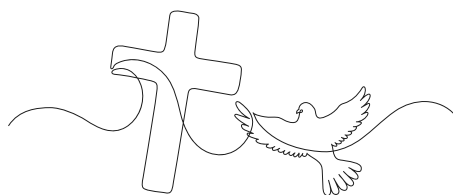
Two silver jubilarians of ordination are new to the province. **Fr. John Jaejun Chong** has just come from Korea to serve the Korean parishioners at Mary Help of Christians Parish in Tampa. He was ordained on November 11, 2000, in Seoul, his hometown. He was born there in 1968 and made his first profession at Daejeon, South Korea, in 1994. He studied both philosophy



*Fr. Thomas Gwozdź (second from the right) prepares to be ordained a Salesian priest by St. Paul VI during the 1975 jubilee year
Credit: Fr. Thomas Gwozdź, SDB*

and theology at Gwangu Catholic University and has done Salesian ministry in Seoul.

Fr. Krzysztof Nizniak was ordained in Wrocław, Poland, on May 5, 2000. He was born at Lubin in the Silesian region of Poland in 1970 and made his novitiate at Kopiec in 1990-1991. He went to Africa as a missionary in 1995 and studied theology at Nairobi. He became a member of the Anglophone West Africa Province, since reorganized to form West Africa-South, including Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. He expects to arrive in New Rochelle toward the end of September to become assistant director of Salesian Missions.



Please pray for all the jubilarians of 2025, and stay tuned to see how the event went. It will be featured in next week's issue of *Salesian News*.



*Frs. Alain Léonard and Mike Pace, SDBs, with Le Salesien students
Credit: Fr. Alain Léonard, SDB*

In the Footsteps of Don Bosco

By Fr. Alain Léonard, SDB

(Sherbrooke, QC – September 10) – A group of 14 young people from Le Salesien gathered to discover Don Bosco's great dream in Italy from Tuesday, August 5, to Sunday, August 17. At the root of this great dream was the positive response of the young John Bosco to become a priest and companion to young people adrift in the great city of Turin. For the young people of Le Salesien, it was a wonderful opportunity to discover how Don Bosco answered God's call. The trip also gave them insights into the inspirations, joys, successes, trials, courage, and perseverance of Don Bosco, a man of faith who loved young people to the very end!

The presence of Fr. Michael Pace, SDB, as a guide proved to be a tremendous asset for this French-speaking group. Fr. Mike's accompaniment helped the group as they also grasped the presence of God and Mary, who animated Don Bosco throughout his life. Bravo, Fr. Mike!



*Club members on their first day
Credit: Bro. Bob Metell, SDB*

East Boston: First Day of the Club Year

By Bro. Bob Metell, SDB

(East Boston, MA – September 10) – The chill in the air, the changing of the color of the leaves, and the presence of the school buses on the city streets can mean only one thing—the regular club year after-school programs have returned. Monday, September 8, marked the first day back to the Salesian Boys and Girls Club's (the Club) regular programming. The staff had many fun and exciting events and activities planned. It was great to see the youngsters again, many of whom grew over the summer.

Several noteworthy events are approaching, the first being our **annual Board of Directors golf fundraiser tournament**, scheduled for Monday, September 29. This event is one of our major fundraising events. The Club wouldn't be able to function if it weren't for the dedicated men and women who serve on the Board of Directors. They provide funding

and guidance for the Club through their business expertise and community outreach. They not only raise funds, but they also promote the Club throughout the greater Boston Metro area. The second event is the Halloween Costume Party in October.

*Stay tuned for more updates
from East Boston!*

Reflecting on One Year in Port Chester

**By Fr. Eddie Chincha, SDB,
CYM, St. John Bosco Parish,
Port Chester, NY**

Dear friends,

As the new school year began, I had the grace to complete my first year in my new assignment here at St. John Bosco Parish in Port Chester. This was the same place where I grew up and was nourished in my Salesian vocation.

I had many blessings along the way this year. These included how I was warmly welcomed by my home parish, how I was able to bond with my wonderful brothers in community, and how I was able to succeed in my apostolic work among the young people of the parish, with whom I was able to directly relate since it was my home parish.

There were many great moments this year. One of them was celebrating weddings, especially the one that involved the younger brother of a high school friend of mine, who passed away a few years ago. I also reconnected with past pupils whom I



*Fr. Eddie Chincha, SDB (right), and Port Chester youths in NYC
Credit: Fr. Eddie Chincha, SDB*

taught at Salesian High School in New Rochelle and organized a service project for some Tampa alumni. I was happiest with being able to help our ministries in Port Chester grow, although most of the credit should really go to our extremely committed parishioners and lay leaders.

Finally, I was able to experience a different side of ministry, that of being a parish priest instead of being a priest working in a school. It was quite a change to go from living and working within a very structured schedule to one that was unstructured; within the daily schedule of the latter anything could happen, such as emergency anointings, funerals, and people dropping by the rectory to speak to a priest. Also, I struggled as to how I would be able to effectively minister to young people without encountering them on a daily basis, as I would in a school setting. Here is where the words of the late Pope Francis were very helpful to me: "Just be their priest." God took care of the rest. I found it liberating to not be a part of the school administration any longer. In parish ministry I have been able to do more of what I always wanted to do—to be available to spiritually accompany young people by just being "their" Salesian priest.

Both types of ministries, school and parish, are wonderful experiences. They both help young people in different ways and challenge our personal growth in holiness.



*Bosco Bicycle participants
Credit: Fr. Alain Léonard, SDB*

Sherbrooke: Young Flock to Bosco Bicycle

By Fr. Alain Léonard, SDB

(Sherbrooke, QC – September 10)

– Bosco Bicycle is an activity that was created to enable young teenagers to grow on a human, spiritual, and Christian level. After its existence for 39 seasons, young people still continue to sign up to have fun and experience moments of pure happiness!

Young people who participate in "Bosco Bicycle" succeed not only in strengthening their legs, but in strengthening their friendships. They benefit from pastoral care (morning and evening prayers, Eucharist, Reconciliation) and realize Jesus can also be their friend. It's a source of pride to take on the challenge of cycling 165 miles, and it becomes an experience of surpassing oneself.

Living as a team, sharing, and showing solidarity lead to greater maturity and autonomy. Bosco Bicycle is a wonderful week outdoors to discover one's qualities, talents, potential, and flaws while connecting with nature and disconnecting from one's cell phone, computer, and video games.

Upcoming Events

Harvey: Special Needs Mass

**By Fr. Mark Hyde, SDB,
Pastor, Mary Help of
Christians Parish**

Mary Help of Christians Parish will hold its Special Needs Mass on Sunday, September 21, at 2:00 p.m. CDT. There will be snacks and refreshments following the Mass.

East Boston: 7th Annual "Swing FORE Kids" Golf Tournament

By Bro. Bob Metell, SDB

The Salesian Boys & Girls Club's 7th Annual "Swing FORE Kids" Golf Tournament will take place on Monday, September 29, at the Winthrop Golf Club in Winthrop, MA.

For more info, sponsorship opportunities, etc, [click here](#) or [visit the Club's Facebook page](#).

For questions, please contact Michael Triant at 617-567-6626 x11, michaeltriant@salesianclub.com, or Anita Belmonte @ 617-784-1744, abelmonte@salesianclub.com.



*Salesians from the SUE and SUO Provinces gathered at the National Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Stony Point, NY.
Credit: Fr. Franco Pinto, SDB, Vice Provincial, Province Youth Ministry Delegate*

Sept. 11: Province Jubilees
(Stony Point, NY)

Sept. 21: Special Needs Mass (Harvey, LA)

Sept. 29: "Swing FORE Kids" Golf Tournament
(East Boston, MA)

Oct. 3-6: SLR Young Team (Stony Point, NY)

Oct. 6-9: Salesian Leadership Retreat
(Stony Point, NY)

Oct. 19: Special Needs Mass (Harvey, LA)

**Oct. 29-31: Annual Meeting for
Coordinators of Youth Ministry**
(Newton, NJ)

Nov. 20-22: National Catholic Youth Conference
(Indianapolis, IN)

Nov. 23: Special Needs Mass (Harvey, LA)

Various: National Shrine Jubilee 2025 Events
(Stony Point, NY)

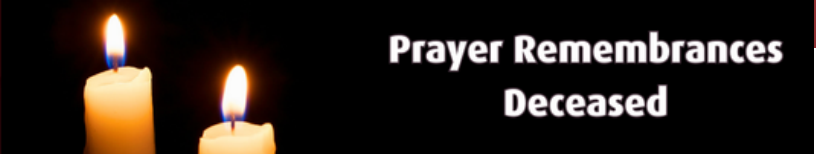
Need a date added?

Let us know by emailing us at communications@salesians.org.



*Le Salesien students visit the house where Don Bosco grew up (top photo) and his final resting place (bottom photo) during their trip to Italy.
Credit: Fr. Alain Léonard, SDB*





Birthdays

September 11: Fr. John Langan
September 13: Fr. Franco Pinto
September 14: Fr. Wacław Swierzbiolek
September 14: Nov. Francis Chazhikattu
September 15: Fr. Patrick Angelucci
September 17: Fr. Eric Wyckoff
September 20: Fr. James Heuser
September 23: Fr. Georges Parent
September 23: Fr. David Sajdak



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to make a gift to the Salesian Society!

Want to know more about how
you can make an impact?
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Prayer Remembrances

All our senior confreres in Stony Point and Tampa
Bro. Joe Ackroyd, SDB
Alejandro Acosta Lagaxio,
nephew of Fr. Raúl M. Acosta Zunini, SDB
José María Acosta Zunini,
brother of Fr. Raúl M. Acosta Zunini, SDB
Jacob Anitra, grandnephew of Bro. Tom Sweeney, SDB
Fr. Jan Bernas, SDB
Fr. William Bucciferro, SDB
Brody Dollinger, grandnephew of Fr. David Sajdak, SDB
Miriam Feliciano, mother of Fr. Abraham Feliciano, SDB
Fr. Dennis Hartigan, SDB
Fr. Frank Kelly, SDB
Todd Lee, father of Daniel Lee, former Salesian Novice
Lyse and Gilles Leonard, parents of Fr. Alain Leonard, SDB
Ken Lindenfelser, brother-in-law of Fr. Dennis Hartigan, SDB
Nicholas Magrogan, Salesian Cooperator and Past Pupil
Fr. Louis Molinelli, SDB
Fr. Frank Moloney, SDB (Australia Province)
John Myler, former SDB
Theresa Notare, mother of Andrea Zimmerman,
Province Delegate for the Salesian Family
Salvina Pace, mother of Fr. Mike Pace, SDB
Fr. Georges Parent, SDB
Norma Reyes, aunt of Fr. Abraham Feliciano, SDB
Janine Serio Durso, sister of Fr. John Serio, SDB
Robert Serio, nephew of Fr. John Serio, SDB
Fr. Wacław Swierzbiolek, SDB
Fr. Enzo Trigatti, SDB
Bro. Henry Van der Velden, SDB

Deceased

Fr. Armand Oliveri, SDB (SUO Province)



“Prayer is the key that opens God's heart.”

Luc. Gio Bono

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