

# La Parroquia de San Patricio extiende una mano que ayuda a los niños necesitados

“Cambio para los Niños” - la colecta mensual de gran éxito en la Parroquia de San Patricio en San Diego - es sólo una de las formas en que los feligreses ayudan a los niños abusados, abandonados y descuidados que viven y son atendidos por el Hogar Infantil La Gloria, en Tijuana, México. Esta casa es patrocinada por los agustinos.

“Hemos puesto una cesta fuera y hemos puesto un anuncio instando a los feligreses a dar lo que puedan para apoyar a los niños”, dice el padre Michael McFadden, OSA, párroco de la iglesia agustiniana. “En general, esta ha sido la actividad más exitosa. Hemos recaudado un promedio de \$500 a \$600 al mes.”

El compromiso con los niños del Hogar Infantil La Gloria ha sido apoyado por toda la parroquia, dice el padre Michael. “Hoy día, la comunidad está más consciente que nunca de las necesidades de estos niños. Tenemos una linda tradición de hacer las cosas con amor por el bien de los niños”.

Otras formas en que la parroquia apoya al Hogar Infantil son:

- ◆ La escuela de St. Patrick tiene una fiesta para celebrar el Banquete de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe con el fin de ayudar a recaudar fondos para el Hogar Infantil. Con juegos y un almuerzo, la fiesta suele recaudar más de \$ 1,000.

- ◆ Al igual que otras caridades católicas, los fondos recaudados en las cenas de la parroquia durante la Cuaresma, se destinan a Hogar Infantil.

- ◆ Al menos una vez al año, la parroquia auspicia un desayuno de panqueques para beneficiar el Hogar Infantil.

- ◆ Hace años, la parroquia comenzó la operación “Cinderella” programa en el que zapatos, dulces, ropa y juguetes son enviados a jóvenes del Hogar Infantil. Esa tradición sigue vigente.

- ◆ La feligrés María Sosa y otros miembros de la comunidad latina de San Patricio coleccionan alimentos, ropa y otros artículos esenciales y los envían al Hogar Infantil.



“Cambio para los Niños” cesta en la iglesia de San Patricio.

- ◆ Además de las contribuciones monetarias y las donaciones en forma de servicios y artículos, la comunidad latina ha proporcionado nuevo equipo de cómputo, el cual será utilizado en el Hogar Infantil La Gloria.

“Personalmente, siento que cada vez que ayudamos a las personas que lo necesitan, ayudamos a que el Espíritu de Cristo esté presente”, comenta el padre Michael.

## FATHER TOM (continued from front page)

to update the corporate culture and management styles to conform with new realities and laws such as equal opportunity legislation.

### Discovering His New Destiny

Through all those years of working and raising four kids, he was nevertheless very active in lay ministries. Deeply spiritual and always a seeker, he was striving to adjust to the new realities in his life. He had no idea that sharing a casual cup of coffee would change his life forever.

One morning at 5 a.m. on a Cursillo retreat, it was Tom's turn to make coffee. Half asleep, he noticed a man baking in the kitchen and took him a cup of coffee. The baker in turn gave Tom a sweet roll. The baker was the late Fr. Walt Vogel, O.S.A., an Augustinian friar. They talked that first day, and Fr. Walt invited Tom to visit the community periodically to get acquainted.

Tom especially liked the camaraderie among the friars and was impressed by the ways in which they lived out the principles of St. Augustine. “Augustine had a brilliant mind, but he was also a man of the heart, a man of the people,” he reflects. “That was part of what attracted me to the Order.”

At age 51, Tom became a pre-novice. It felt right from the first and he began to discern a vocation to the religious life as an Augustinian. After the Novitiate and Theology studies, he was ordained a priest in 1999.

After ordination, Fr. Tom served at St. Thomas, then became chaplain at St. Augustine's High School, San Diego. Asking to go back to parish work, he served as pastor of St. Patrick's

parish, San Diego, and as pastor at Our Lady of Grace in Castro Valley, CA.

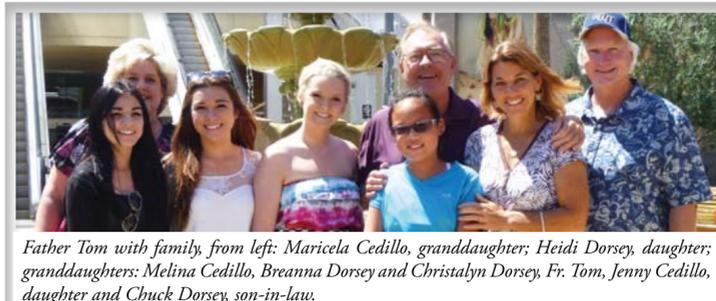
He believes his unique background as family man and businessman has benefited his ministry

in different ways. For example, he thinks his experiences as husband and father help him in counseling people in various situations. “Hopefully my homilies are enriched somewhat by experience,” he says. “And having been in business, I'd learned how to prioritize.”

### 'I got more than I gave'

The ability to prioritize came in very handy when Fr. Tom arrived at St. Thomas last year. With the long illness and untimely death of the previous pastor, Fr. Steve Ochoa, O.S.A., the parish was experiencing a pastoral vacuum for most of 2012. Working 12- to 14-hour days, Fr. Tom got worn down and was suddenly prone to colds and flu. He finally made himself slow down.

Now with things on a more manageable routine, he is thoroughly enjoying being a pastor, celebrating Mass every day, officiating at weddings, comforting the grieving, counseling individuals and couples, and working to build



Father Tom with family, from left: Maricela Cedillo, granddaughter; Heidi Dorsey, daughter; granddaughters: Melina Cedillo, Breanna Dorsey and Christalyn Dorsey, Fr. Tom, Jenny Cedillo, daughter and Chuck Dorsey, son-in-law.

community among parishioners. On his day off, he gets out to play tennis, long a favorite avocation. He particularly enjoys getting together with his kids and their families, where he is known as “Father Dad.”

In 2011, forty-five years after he completed his Peace Corps tour, he went back to Africa to visit the area he had served. Although poverty is still rampant, he found that education is now more available. HIV, which had been killing many people, was now under control. “They're doing all kinds of good things now,” he says. “The people are still joyful, just beautiful to be with.”

His visit brought back a lot of memories. “I remember coming home all those years ago after the two-year tour,” recalls Fr. Tom. “People in my home town would say how wonderful I was to have served in the Peace Corps. I could honestly say that I got so much more out of it than I gave. That statement applies pretty much to my whole life, including now, serving the people of St. Thomas.”



# Spiritu

Fall 2013

Published by the Augustinians of the West

## Diverse Background Enriches Pastoral Ministry

*“The Holy Spirit runs this parish; I don't. And that's an understatement.”*

It also says something about the speaker, Father Thomas G. Verber, O.S.A., who took over as pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Ojai, CA last year. Affable and down-to-earth, Fr. Tom looks back with gratitude on the blessings God has brought to his life so far: A tour in the Peace Corps; success in teaching and in a business career; marriage (later annulled) and four kids (now grown with their own families); and a call from the Lord at midlife to join the Augustinian Order and ordination to the priesthood. Born in Racine, WI into a staunch Catholic family, Tom Verber attended local elementary and secondary schools run by the Dominicans, and entered Dominican College, where he earned his undergraduate degree. He started a teaching career and was working on his Master's in Education at Western Michigan University.

One day a Peace Corps recruiter came into his music seminar needing ten musicians to teach music in the Dominican Republic. A trumpet player, young Tom jumped at the chance. But that assignment fell through due to a sudden break in diplomatic relations between the U.S. and the Dominican Republic.

“At first I went because of the music. I didn't really have any idea of what the Peace Corps was all about,” Fr. Tom recalls with a grin. “But by then I was hooked because it was just such a marvelous group of people that I was willing to go anyplace. That's how I ended up in East Africa, Tanganyika at the time, teaching school.”

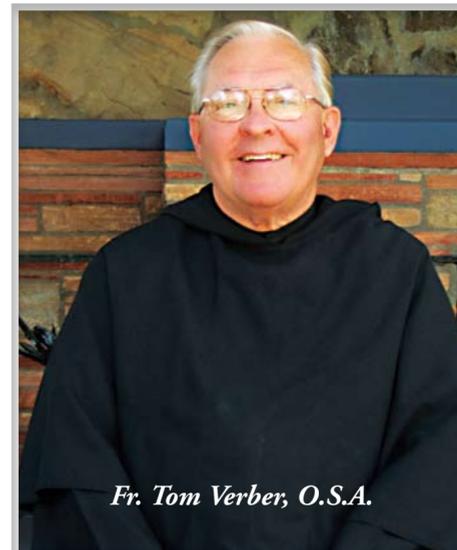
### The Next Chapter

After the Peace Corps tour, he landed a job as an instructor with a company teaching English as a second language in Saudi Arabia. After 17 months, he came home to the U.S. and left again, traveling around the world for a couple of years.

Back home again after that, he proceeded to settle down. He was married and he and his wife became parents of two daughters, Jennifer and Heidi, and adopted two sons, Darren and John.

He had landed a dream job in the headquarters of Union Pacific Railroad, working in human resources. He started the first sales training program the railroad ever had, and did a lot of training. The most exciting part of the UP job for him was when he became a “change agent.” That involved working

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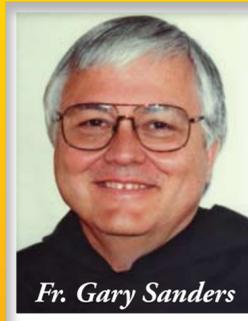
Fr. Tom Verber, O.S.A.

## Letter From the Editor

**Very Reverend Gary Sanders, OSA  
Prior Provincial St. Augustine  
Province**

St. Augustine, in his Commentary on Psalm 85 (7) speaks about the dialog of prayer:

*“Your prayer is a conversation with God: when you read, God is speaking to you; when you pray, you are speaking to God.”*



Fr. Gary Sanders

In this issue of *Spiritu* we have several examples of people who have read, reflected, inquired, and prayed. All of these people --- as young persons and not so young, as people with a wealth of experience and some who are just beginning to put what they have learned into practice --- have been enabled to do so by the fulcrum which is a conversation with God.

One Augustinian friar began his conversation as a member of the Peace Corps in Africa, two others (twenty years apart in age) were ordained together on June 15<sup>th</sup> of this year, while one other man is entering the novitiate after travelling the world and helping the poorest of the poor.

First and foremost, we Augustinians are men who have been called to respond to our conversations with God.

That means mobilizing Augustinian parishes and schools throughout our Western Province to support our home for needy children; as well as leading 25 young people to the worldwide Augustinian Youth Encounter in Brazil this July; and countless other lifegiving ministries every day.

I invite those who might be considering our way of life, as well as all of our colleagues, parishioners and students to listen in --- eavesdrop if you will --- to some of our *conversations* taking place in our dialog with God.

Fr. Gary

## Hogar Infantil La Gloria

### A Safe Haven for the Most Vulnerable among Us



Daniel Roderick at playtime.

A child excitedly opening a Christmas present... Not worrying where the next meal will come from... Being able to peacefully drift off to sleep... Thriving in a stable environment... Delighting in freedom from fear...

These fundamental blessings — which every child should enjoy — are what Hogar Infantil La Gloria is all about. For nearly 40 years, this Augustinian-sponsored home for abused, abandoned and neglected children in Tijuana, Mexico has been a safe haven where kids are well cared for and loved.

Hogar Infantil reflects the unique character of the Augustinians, says Jesse Imbriano, co-director of the home with Daniel Roderick.

“Unlike other religious orders that focus on one type of ministry, the Augustinians go where they are needed,” reflects Jesse. “Back in the 1970s, I don't think the West Coast Augustinians had any experience supporting a children's home, but they responded to the call. Hogar infantil was founded by lay persons with the support of the Augustinians because the need was recognized.”

Central also to the Augustinian charism is the commitment to building community.

*(continued inside)*

## Yes! I would like to learn more about the Augustinians.

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## ‘Our Hearts are Restless until They Rest in You — St. Augustine

Robert Baiocco has been a world traveler, a manager in the hospitality industry, a missionary, and always, a seeker.

He believes he is well on his way to finding his restless heart’s aspiration — as a novice in the Order of Saint Augustine at the Augustinian

Novitiate in Racine, WI.

“Augustinian life in community acts as a daily refuge for me, offering tranquility and brotherhood amid the fast-paced world,” says Robert. “It is a relief to find a group of men who are intent on praising and serving God in oneness of mind and

heart, both actively and contemplatively.”

Born in Batavia, New York, Robert moved with his family to Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, where he graduated from high school and spent two years studying hotel management at Palm Beach State College.

He left Florida in 1994 to travel and begin his career in the hotel industry. Since then, he has lived, worked and studied in numerous U.S. cities and abroad. His travels have taken him to Europe, Jamaica, Central and South America, Southeast Asia, Morocco and the Philippines.

Robert, now 41, began to explore his calling to religious life in 2006 when his close friend in New York, Fr. Ivan Trujillo, taught him how to minister to migrant farm workers.

A few years later, he turned to his parish priest in Oregon, Fr. Jim Clifford, O.S.A. Fr. Jim recommended that Robert visit the Augustinian community in San Diego. Robert was invited to stay for a time. While there, he was introduced to the work of Hogar Infantil. From there, he was an independent missionary, in the U.S., the Philippines and India.

He moved into the Augustinians’ St. Rita House in San Francisco as a pre-novice last year. His routine consisted of prayer, study and brotherly fellowship. He ministered at St. Vincent de Paul’s Wellness Center, working with recovering addicts, and served as an acolyte at St. Agnes Church.

In early August, Robert began studies at the Augustinian Novitiate.



## HOGAR INFANTIL LA GLORIA (continued from front page)

“Above all, we strive to build a secure home for the children where they feel they belong,” says Jesse. “Our work is to create the most fundamental community, a family — a loving family in which kids can develop and grow.”

### A High Priority for Augustinian Western Province

Supporting this deserving family of young ones has been a high priority for the Augustinian Western Province since the beginning and continues to be today.

In the 1970s, the late Fr. John Blethen, O.S.A. was the first of the San Diego Augustinians to serve as Administrator of Hogar Infantil. His long tenure was followed by the late Fr. Steve Ochoa, O.S.A. Deacon (now Father) Fernando Lopez, O.S.A. also spent several years as the Augustinian ministering there before going to the seminary a few years ago.

Several years ago the Augustinian Western Province hired two energetic young Catholic laymen, Daniel and Jesse, to team up and continue the Augustinians’ commitment to Hogar Infantil. They assumed these responsibilities bringing long experience and deep commitment. They had begun their involvement with the home six years ago as members of the Augustinian Volunteers in San Diego.

Daniel works on-site, ‘round-the-clock as the General

Director of the home. His responsibilities range from hiring and directing staff to procuring needed supplies and everything in between, in addition to his direct caregiving role.

Jesse is on site at the home part-time. On the U.S. side of the border, he takes the lead in fundraising and other administrative tasks that come with running a nonprofit. Oh, and yes, he has a fulltime job as a lawyer in San Diego.

Throughout all the years, Augustinian friars throughout California and in Oregon have marshaled support for Hogar Infantil in their parishes and in the two Augustinian high schools, St. Augustine’s in San Diego and Villanova Prep, Ojai. All ministries in the Province conduct fundraising projects to assist with Hogar Infantil. In addition, the Province pays Daniel’s salary and Daniel’s and Jesse’s expenses.

“Individual friars and communities make donations, both monetary and in-kind,” says Jesse. “They welcome us into their respective ministries. Their sincere support for the

cause and for me personally helped me make San Diego home and commit to this work.”

### Hogar Infantil is Growing to Meet Growing Kids’ Needs

Currently, Hogar Infantil is home to 32 boys and girls ranging in age from two through 14, plus David, the most senior resident who has lived continuously at the home since

entering the on-site nursery some 21 years ago.

All of the children are placed at Hogar Infantil by DIF, the Mexican government agency similar to child protective services in the U.S. While DIF retains legal custody and some oversight, the kids are entrusted to Hogar Infantil staff’s care as a privately-run and privately-funded organization.

The children live fulltime at the home, which is responsible for food, clothing, medical, dental and when needed, behavioral health care. The youngsters attend nearby bilingual Catholic elementary and middle schools.

Hogar Infantil currently employs 20 fulltime Mexican employees to provide round-the-clock care for the kids. This includes a staff nurse who coordinates health care as well as the nursery and a psychologist who takes care of education and child development activities. When possible, the staff takes the children offsite to social, cultural and recreational activities.

Traditionally, the home has cared for infants and young children up to age 12. But what happens to them then?

“We could not continue to promise our children that they had become part of our family only to send them away upon reaching adolescence, a difficult time for every child,” says Daniel. “So in 2010, we launched a project to gradually expand our programming and facilities to accommodate the children who are already part of our family as they grow through adolescence into independent adulthood.”

In that year, Hogar built new dormitories for young adolescents. Daniel says the oldest boys are now ready for the next phase, which will require facilities that provide both age-appropriate space and privacy, enabling them to learn more independent life skills.

“We’re now in the process of developing a master plan for our entire home so we can best design needed facilities as our home continues to grow,” says Daniel. “Then we can construct those facilities in phases over coming years.”



Jesse Imbriano with children

# Two Brother Augustinians Ordained to Priesthood



Two men differing in age, personality and background but united as brothers in their commitment to the values of St. Augustine and the Augustinian Order, were ordained to the priesthood June 15.

Fathers Fernando Lopez, O.S.A., 52, and Mark Menegatti, O.S.A., 29, received Holy Orders at Our Mother of Good Counsel Church, Hollywood. Officiating was Most Rev. Daniel Turley, O.S.A., Bishop of Chulucanas, Peru.

Both expressed gratitude for the support they received from their brother Augustinians as they went through their years of spiritual formation.

Fernando came to the U.S. as a teenager in 1978, leaving from his small village in Michoacan, Mexico after the murder of his father. He needed to find work to support his widowed mother and siblings.

In the late 1980s Fernando became active as a lay minister in his parish, serving as youth minister and forming a Hispanic Community in which he evangelized, organizing retreats and classes. In 2000, he was accepted into the Augustinians’ Pre-novice program in San Diego.

After the Novitiate and completing the required study, he was ordained to the permanent diaconate, eventually discerning his vocation to the priesthood.

“My ordination was a wonderful moment that I’ve waited for a long time,” says Fr. Fernando. “Seeing the bishop

anointing my hands and the imposition of hands was the most memorable moment of the ceremony. I felt transformed by it.”

Fr. Fernando is assigned to St. Thomas Aquinas parish, Ojai, CA, where he will minister to the entire parish as associate pastor, including the growing Hispanic community there.

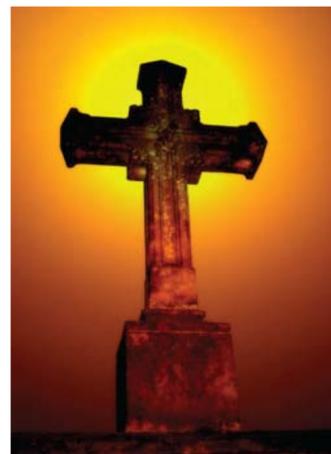
When Fr. Mark Menegatti looks at his priestly ordination, he sees it as belonging to Christ and the Church rather than to him personally. “When I had that small piece of white cloth put on my shoulders, I was surprised at how heavy it was,” he reflects. “I’m also noticing that instead of being ecstatic, terrified or anything else, my ordination feels natural.”

A Los Angeles native, Fr. Mark will be starting his priestly career with Campus Ministry and Retreats at St. Augustine’s High School, San Diego, continuing his commitment to youth ministry. As a layman and Augustinian brother, he has demonstrated creativity and innovation in reaching out to young people, including rapping out the Good News to a Hip Hop music beat.

“I am always interested in helping young people to find themselves, as well as their relationship with God,” says Fr. Mark. “I really want them to be close to Christ, and learn to live in the Way as the fullest expression of themselves —rather than telling them what’s what.”



## Timeline: Steps toward Becoming an Augustinian



### Enquirer:

The first step is looking for information about the Augustinians and seeing if what one learns draws one towards discerning a vocation to the Order.

### Discerner:

When a person feels attracted to the life of brotherhood in the Augustinian

Order, he becomes an active discerner, to see if it seems God’s plan that he enter

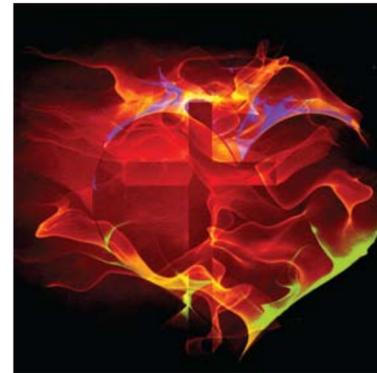


the Order. At times, a discerner can live in community for awhile during discernment.

### Pre-novice:

When a person has completed the formal application process for the Order, he becomes a pre-novice, living in community in order to grow in knowledge of Augustinian life and to prepare for the novitiate

year. Generally, the pre-novitiate is for one year.



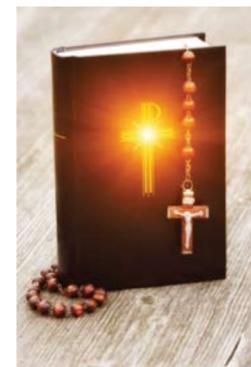
### Novice:

When a person is judged ready for the novitiate experience, he spends a year at the novitiate in Racine, Wisconsin, learning more about prayer, Augustinian spirituality, Augustinian history and

customs, as well as the implications of the vowed life.

### Simple Profession:

At the end of the novitiate year, the candidate takes vows of



poverty, chastity, and obedience for a period of one year, which can be renewed each year for up to five years. The men in simple profession generally live at St. Augustine Friary, Chicago, and study at the Catholic Theological Union. After two years of studying theology, students have a pastoral year back in California, often taking clinical pastoral education and working in ministry. Often, it is during this time that a student decides

whether he wants to take courses to prepare for ordination as a priest or take courses to help him serve as a non-ordained brother ministering to people’s needs.

### Solemn Profession:

After at least three years of simple, temporary profession of the vows, a member is invited to take solemn vows as an Augustinian, vows for a life of service. This is the final step in becoming an Augustinian. He is then a full-fledged brother in the Order for life. Many are called to the priesthood.

Fr. Tom Whelan, O.S.A. Vocations Director, Province of St. Augustine

