

The Vincentian

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Spotlight on ...



Mary Rasmussen, a native of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, moved to Arizona in 1957. After attending Business College, she worked as a medical secretary in a doctor's office for three years. Together with her husband, who passed away in 1994, she raised two biological and two adopted children. Even though she enjoys spending time with her family, especially her six grandchildren, she faithfully serves Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parish in many different ways.

For the past 10 years, Mary has been an active member of our St. Vincent de Paul conference, mainly delivering food. "It is such a blessing to help the less fortunate," she says. "They try so hard to get along with as little as possible. It is a privilege to be able to tend to their needs." Mary Rasmussen and Mary Ziegman, her friend and home visit partner, make it a point to not only provide material assistance, but to also pray with the clients and bring them closer to God.

Mary's love of the Lord also shines through in her long-time service as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist. Moreover, she is an active member of the Sodality and the "Bible Alive" bible study group. With her attention to detail, she is also the perfect person to oversee the "Sacristy Angels," a group of women who keep the space around the altar neat and tend to the altar cloths and the server outfits. One morning a week, she also volunteers in the library of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School.

Thank you, Mary, for enriching all those who are fortunate enough to meet you with your deep sense of spirituality and your love.

New SVdP Spiritual Advisor: Fr. Johnrose H. Hayden

(by Adelheid Thieme)



Fr. Johnrose Henault Hayden, senior priest at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel since the summer of 2003, has recently joined our conference as our new Spiritual Advisor. He kindly agreed to make himself available for an interview:

A: Fr. Johnrose, our conference appreciates your willingness to serve as our Spiritual Advisor. What motivates you to take on that role?

Fr.: I have always been closely involved with the life of the parishes where I lived, for example by being a member of the local St. Vincent de Paul Society or the parish council. As a Spiritual Advisor and a priest, it is my privilege to encourage people to die to themselves and live for God.

A: How long have you been a priest?

Fr.: After the death of my wife in 1989, with the encouragement of the late Fr. McCready, I felt the call to enter the priesthood. Two seminaries rejected me because of my age. I entered the Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut, in January of 1991. To shorten my studies, I took philosophy classes at Northern Arizona State University in Flagstaff. Some of these classes were taught by my very own daughter. I was ordained on December 9, 1995, the feast of San Juan Diego, by Bishop Placido Rodriguez for the Diocese of Lubbock, Texas, at its Christ the King Cathedral.

A: What inspired you to become a priest?

Fr.: The example of my wife of 35 years, Rose Mary, inspired this "cradle Catholic" to consider the priesthood. She was a convert who was very close

to God. She was also a very joyful woman who taught me to joyfully love God.

A: What did you do professionally before you became a priest?

Fr.: Initially, I studied Animal Husbandry and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in that field from Agricultural and Mechanical College, in Stillwater, Oklahoma. After my graduation, I did a variety of things until I was drafted for military service.

A: What were your duties in the military?

Fr.: I was drafted at the time of the Korean War. I enlisted in 1953 and served as an instructor in the Navy for six months and as an Air Traffic Controller in the Air Force for a year and a half. In 1955, after my marriage to Rose Mary Moore the previous year, I returned to my seismograph work with the Texas Company (now Texaco) in Longview, Texas. In 1959, with two children, Rose and I decided that I should go back to school on the GI bill.

A: What did you study?

Fr.: I studied Physics and graduated in 1961 from Oklahoma State University with a Master's degree. Then I taught Physics at Oklahoma Central State College for one year. However, to better support my growing family – four of our five children were already born at that time – I chose to make a career change from teaching to semiconductor manufacturing.

A: What companies did you work for and in what capacity?

Fr.: In 1962, Motorola employed me as an engineer in the fabrication of semiconductors and integrated circuits. In 1966, I moved to the San Francisco Bay area where I worked for Sigenetics Corp. Later, I worked for IBM, in various locations on the east coast. My wife used to say that I worked for the "I've been moved" company. I first worked in patent engineering, then in troubleshooting.

A: When did you retire from engineering?

Fr.: I retired in 1987 to take care of my wife who had suffered for many years from Wielander-Kuldeburg Syndrome, a neurological disease that forced her to eventually use a wheelchair. She bore

her painful illness without complaints, but rather with thanksgiving that she was able to raise and enjoy our five children as well as our grandchildren. With smiles and admirable strength, she trusted in God's providence, accepting her trials as an opportunity to give glory to God.

A: In that respect, you also seem to be following your wife's example. The parishioners at Mt. Carmel admire you for bearing your physical impairments with great fortitude.

Fr.: Thanks for the compliment, but many parishioners do the same and more. I see many individuals who are caring for handicapped children or spouses with Alzheimer's and are truly inspirational. I suffered a stroke in 1996, a hip fracture in 1998, and a heart attack as well as triple bypass surgery in 2002. But the merciful God granted me sufficient recovery time to continue my ministry. I try to do my best to be of service in the parishes of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Tempe and the Good Shepherd Mission of St. Rose Philippine Duchesne in New River. Part of my ministry is to be a witness and a reminder that priesthood is a vocation to serve others in spite of human frailties. Like every priest, I offer up my imperfections for the greater glory of God.

A: Do you have a vision for our SVdP conference?

Fr.: I would like to urge the conference members to give more emphasis to the adoration of the Eucharist. The Year of the Eucharist is a perfect time to enter into deeper spiritual communion with the Lord. This relationship with Christ will enable the conference members to make Christ more visible to the people they serve.

I would like to thank you for your time and effort for this interview. I appreciate the opportunity to serve Vincentians as their chaplain. Perhaps we can truly lead our parish community to celebrate the feast day of St. Vincent de Paul on Tuesday, September 27.

Let us pray: Lord, may we strive to help all the poor, the sick, the abandoned and others afflicted with the ills of our culture, so that they, as well as we ourselves, may find the tranquility of God's merciful love for ever and ever. Amen.

Truck Emissions

(by Ken Burger)

Our conference has its own pickup truck, which we use for picking up donations. Unfortunately, as old as it is, the State still requested that we take it in for emissions testing one last time.

First off, we had to worry about the cost. The registration cost \$31.62, which we paid in advance. The paperwork did not say anything about additional charges. We tried calling the information number, where we reached someone who assured us that everything was paid for.

I was given the very important quest to take our Lord's truck in for testing. When I arrived at the testing station, everything seemed to be working perfectly. There was nobody in front of me. I was immediately waved right into the testing bay. They then told me to wait in a little booth the size of a confessional, but with no curtains. I sat down and watched them as they lifted the hood, hooked up all the equipment and put a big hose on the tailpipe. It was then that someone came into the booth and told me how much I had to pay - \$27.75.

Now, if you remember, someone had already assured us that it had been paid for, but to tell the testing technicians that is completely useless. Neither was it helpful to try to convince them that the truck belonged to Jesus, not myself, and that his church would pay for it. (It would seem that the Church has poor credit where the State is concerned.) When I told them that I would have to go back and get a check, they demanded cash, which I did not have.

We tried again, of course. Don Ong wrote a check for \$27.75, which I took with me to a different emissions testing station.

This time, the routine was very similar, except that nobody ever asked me for any money. Instead, they hooked up all the machines, put the hose on the tailpipe, blew under the hood with a big fan, then took everything away. I offered them the check, but one of them told me they could not test the truck. The tailpipe was too holy.

The next week, after the holes in the tailpipe had been repaired, I tried again. Equipped with my SVdP check, all the proper paperwork and a large coffee, I took the truck back to the testing station.

This time, they hooked up all the same equipment, put me back in the glass confessional, and actually tested the truck.

When it was done, they would not tell me whether the truck passed until I paid. Of course, I had Jesus's check ready to hand to them. It's too bad I had no ID to prove I was Jesus. They didn't want to take the check without proper ID.

Of course, when they asked why Jesus didn't come bring the truck in himself, I had to say that I didn't know when he'd be back...

In Memoriam

(by Ben Picone)

We recently lost two valuable members of our conference. **Vince Reuter**, who passed away on August 1st due to complications of Parkinson's Disease, was a loyal member of our conference. He was a gentle man who enjoyed delivering food to needy families, and he always impressed me by his strength and endurance when we were stacking boxes at the Food Reclamation Center. He remained one of our most generous benefactors long after he was no longer physically able to deliver food boxes and serve as our spiritual advisor. A retired Professor of Industrial Management at Arizona State University, he maintained a keen interest in the operations of our conference, emphasizing productivity and efficiency. There are many poor people in our parish who have lost a caring friend.

Julie Hessinger left us on August 8th after a short illness. A longtime member of our conference, she answered phone calls from people seeking aid. In addition to arranging the delivery of food boxes and financial aid, she provided counseling and a shoulder to cry on. She herself had known hard times. After the death of her father, she had to quit school and work three jobs to support her mother, brother, and sisters. Her strong faith gave her a sense of what was right or wrong. She was well-organized and helped us keep on track during our conference meetings. Julie lived her life joyfully. She especially shone when she arranged a party for our conference or cooked the main meal for a parish festival. The Sangria she mixed was delicious. Her kindness and thoughtfulness will be missed by many of us.

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June Potluck



Enjoying the June Potluck are (from left to right) our volunteers Frances Garcia, Olga Herrera, Eva Picone, Barbara Pawlak, Dot Riegel, and Alice Allen.

We Need Your Help

First of all, a heart-felt thank you to all those who generously supported our conference during our June food drive. We were able to fill two whole trucks with non-perishable food items.

At this time we also need to **request your help**. After Gerry Green, our beloved “most valuable member” who used to stock our pantry with food, passed away, we are in dire need of volunteers who have the time and the physical strength to pick up food boxes (weighing no more than 50 pounds each) from the SVdP Food Reclamation Center in downtown Phoenix once a week. The Center is open Tuesdays to Fridays from 6:00-2:30 and Saturdays 6:00-11:30. This would be a weekly commitment of about 2 hours.

If you or someone you know can make such a sacrifice to alleviate the suffering of the less fortunate in our community, please contact Don at (480) 966-1974. May God bless you for your generosity.