



Meméto

THE PRIESTLY FRATERNITY OF ST. PETER

North American Province



Assumption

AUGUST 2023



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Cover image: Assumption of the Virgin, Corrado Giaquinto, 1740s (recolored).

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Laudetur Jesus Christus!

The Fraternity of St. Peter has received both good news and bad news since I wrote the last column for the Memento. To start with the bad news, a long-time priest of the Fraternity, Fr. James Jackson, has pled guilty in federal court to receiving Child Sexual Abuse Material. This is a terrible thing. The use of such vile material must be condemned in the strongest terms. Our Lord Himself used very forceful words in condemning even lesser sins against children (Mt. 18:6). I know many Catholics have felt hurt or betrayed by this whole horrifying incident. I am very sorry for the suffering caused by it. To be sure, the priests of the Fraternity have also felt hurt and betrayed and left with more questions than answers.

We know, though, that when confronted with evidence of horrible sin, we must turn toward Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Although the members of the Church are sinful human beings on all levels, including even the Apostles chosen by Our Lord Himself, He is without sin. God does not call us to be unqualified followers of any human being, but only of Himself. The focus of any Christian must be on Christ, a Divine Person, not on any priest, bishop, or even pope. Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, it is possible for any human being, including members of the Church and the clergy, to fall grievously. The old saying urges us to humility by stating: "There but for the grace of God goeth I." It is a wholesome thing to pray and do penance for ourselves and for all the members of the Church, especially members of the clergy who are called to live pure lives in imitation of the Good Shepherd. God has not and will not abandon His Church. He will always be faithful. We are called to be faithful as well.

The good news touching upon the Fraternity has to do with the case of Sister Wilhelmina Lancaster, OSB who died in May of 2019 in Gower, Missouri. Sr. Wilhelmina's body and religious habit were found in an extraordinarily preserved state when the Sisters were going to transfer her body to the Abbey church. Although only scientific and medical experts are competent to pronounce on the phenomena observed, and only the Church is competent to pronounce on the

heroic virtue of an individual or to rule on the miraculous nature of an event, there are reports of many people being positively affected by this news. The mere fact that positive media coverage of a traditional Catholic Sister has abounded throughout the world, is a good thing.

Sister Wilhelmina bore witness to the traditional Religious Habit of her former community for many decades before approaching the Fraternity of St. Peter with another Sister in the mid-1990s, offering to start a traditional community of women religious affiliated with the Fraternity. They did so in 1995 in Pennsylvania in conjunction with Fr. Arnaud Devillers, FSSP, the North American District Superior at the time. The Sisters assisted with sacristy work in the early years of Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary before the seminary moved to Nebraska in 2000. I remember during my first year of seminary that the first Thanksgiving Dinner I experienced away from home was prepared by Sr. Wilhelmina and the other Sisters. The Sisters eventually moved to Missouri in 2006 and embraced a more contemplative, Benedictine charism.

Sister Wilhelmina lived many years of her life "on the peripheries." She came of age as a black Catholic female in the early 1940's and subsequently became a Religious Sister. She went against the current in continuing to wear the traditional habit in her former community. She further left the relative security of that community at the age of seventy to help found a new community committed to the Traditional Latin Mass. Sister Wilhelmina did all this with humble faith and persevering love of Our Lord and Our Lady. Let us follow her faithful example, being willing to stand up for who we are and what we believe in even in the face of great uncertainty and difficulty. If we stay focused on Our Divine Savior and His Blessed Mother, they will not abandon us. ✝

Fr. William Lawrence, FSSP

Fr. William Lawrence, FSSP
North American Provincial

SS. PETER AND PAUL ARTIST ERIC ARMUSIK

Claudio Salvucci
Communications Director

This year, we wanted to do a little something different for our celebration of our patronal feast. Instead of simply using a painting from centuries ago—as beautiful as they admittedly are—we commissioned a brand-new painting from Pennsylvania artist Eric Armusik.

Armusik is a classical figurative artist who has taken up the techniques and subjects of the Old Masters and rejected the modernist aesthetic of the last century. He is also a devoted husband and father of three, and a member of our FSSP apostolate St. Stephen of Hungary in Allentown, PA.

“I didn’t have any training going into school,” he admitted. “I never painted until I was 20 years old. College gave me art history, and I quickly saw what I loved.”

Armusik grew up Catholic in Northeastern Pennsylvania, amidst some beautiful churches in his hometown. He remembers sitting in the pews praying (and daydreaming) but also staring at the artwork and thinking: “this is what I want to do. And after a semester in Italy, it started making sense to me why art appealed to me.”

But his interest in sacred art didn’t translate well to the tenets of modernism, and professors and fellow artists tried to dissuade him from following his instincts.

“They told me that was passé. I was heartbroken.” Their opinions seemed confirmed during a group critique in art school, in which he “felt destroyed.”

Discouraged, Armusik tried to acquiesce to the prevailing culture and paint in more modernist style, albeit tempered with some nods to tradition. But it wasn’t what he really wanted, and he wasn’t happy with the results. It was his wife Rebekah who put him back on the right track with one simple statement:

“If I could paint the way you can paint, I wouldn’t paint that garbage.”

From then on, he would be unapologetic in his embrace of the past. And to this day, she is one of the only people whose opinion he trusts.

But taking an alternative path within the art world wasn’t easy, and there was little help along the way. There were many techniques he had to learn himself: “Art instructors today

might not cover 20% of what the old masters did.” And there was an aesthetic readjustment that was necessary as well: “I had to rearrange my brain and start trusting my eyes again.”

Luckily, his faith was there to provide support.

The Armusiks were married in the Latin Mass, but spent the first 10 years of their marriage church shopping: “we craved something reverent.” One day they stumbled on the website for St. Stephen’s in Allentown.

Rediscovering sacred tradition gave a new vitality to his longstanding Catholic faith: “The wires were laid down already—it was just turning on the power.”

That faith continues to inform and deepen his work, as religious work continues to come in from clients. “I feel blessed to be able to do that kind of work, and grateful for every opportunity to do so.”

In terms of style, Armusik says he owes much to the Italian artists of the Baroque, particularly Caravaggio’s use of light. In Italy, he had studied Caravaggio intensely, viewing 12 of his pieces in person, some for hours at a time. He was particularly moved by the martyrdom of St. Peter. “It changed my life”

He sees light as “the presence of God in all my work.” He also particularly admires the realism that Caravaggio



brought to art, something that wasn't always appreciated by contemporaries, who expected saints to be portrayed in an idealized manner.

“Caravaggio worked from people, not drawings ... That's why I work with everyday people, because I want to see everyday people in those situations.”

Armusik's most ambitious project to date is a massive series on Dante's Divine Comedy. To respect the original subject matter as much as possible, he works with Dante scholar Dr. Christopher Kleinhenz, Professor Emeritus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

And besides all the other ecclesiastical art and portraiture which he features on his website, a good part of his time is being a mentor and teacher to the next generation. Art instruction is a big part of that, of course. But he is also very dedicated to passing on what he knows beyond the paintbrush, and teaching artists to be successful in their career:

“Art is an entrepreneurial position. The business side is more important the art side, and a half-talented person who is good at marketing is going to succeed where a more talented person won't.”

This might seem like surprising advice from an artist, but he wants artists to succeed at doing what they love best.

Part of Armusik's success involves engaging people where they are at in the digital world.

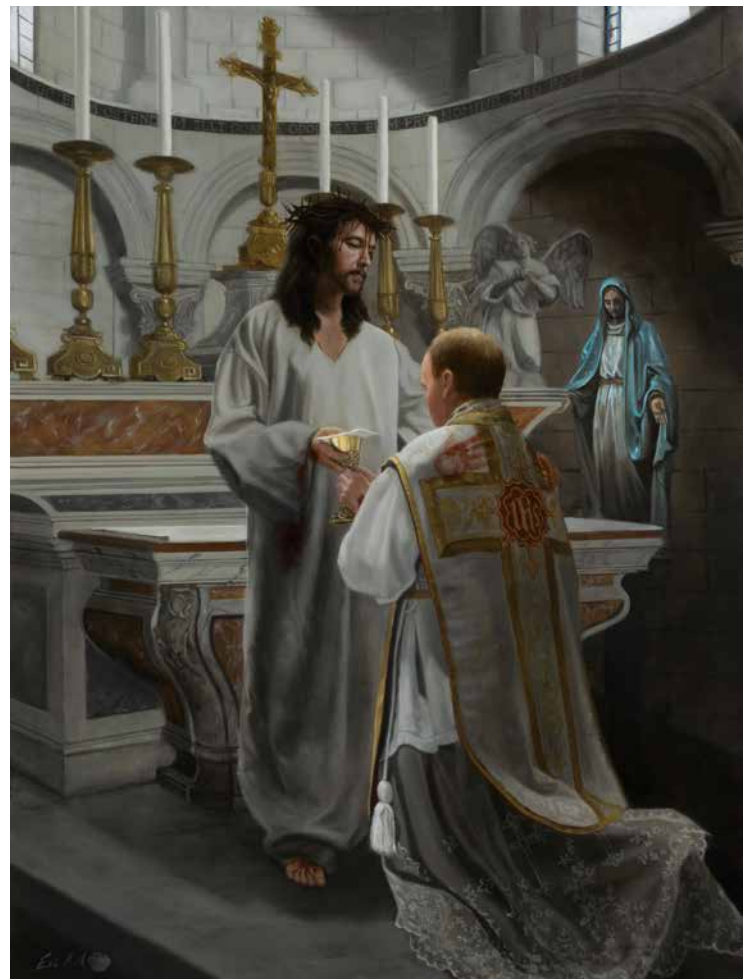
“I put my art out there on social media for everybody. And 97% of it is positive—only a small number of people who are critical.” A Last Supper drawing he happened to share on Tiktok—not a platform usually associated with fine art—received a surprising 380,000 views. “it's great to see people who aren't even of the faith commenting and appreciating. Catholic art is truly beautiful.”

In style, in technique, and even in business, Armusik's art is a unique blend of the old and the new— techniques going back centuries, and themes going back millenia, and all brought forward into the new digital age of social media.

But driving it all is the very same love that inspired a young man from the industrial Northeast to gaze up in wonder at the sacred images that filled the churches of his hometown:

“The world needs more beauty.” ✝

For more of Eric Armusik's art and some great advice for young artists, see his website at <https://www.ericarmusik.com/>. For inquiries or commissions, he can be reached via email at info@ericarmusik.com.



A home that sanctifies itself sanctifies others: what are the steps to follow? This article first appeared in French in Le Baptistère, n°8, June-July 2004. Translation by Anastasiia Cherygova.

A household that sanctifies itself sanctifies others. Just like a good example is stronger than all the tenuous speeches, some practices of the visible worship of Christ in our homes contribute to the Christianisation of the society as a whole.

Sacramentals to Bless the Dwelling Place

Thus, the first object that Christian spouses bring to their new home is a crucifix. It must have a place of honor reserved for it, from where Christ can overlook the home and impart His blessing on it. If it is kept in the parents' bedroom, it would be useful to have one in the living room too, as well as in the center of the family altar, where the entire family would pray together every evening. Don't neglect the social role of the crucifix—put it in the “public” rooms, where it would be visible to others: living room, dining room, office, the entrance area, etc.

Sacramentals also should have a special place in the household, all in order to develop piety and reliance on God. These may include blessed palm branches, full holy water fonts, candles—from Easter or the Purification—and even exorcised salt!

House Blessing

Let's keep in mind also the blessing of the places of everyday activities, especially that of the home itself. By the latter action, the Church wishes to “baptize” her children's households, thus bringing on them abundance of divine graces. “Bless, O Lord, God Almighty, this home, in order that may reign here health, chastity, holiness, virtue, humility, goodness, as well as gentleness, observance of Your laws and thanksgiving...” Subsequently, the priest then goes around the entire house sprinkling holy water. A more specific blessing of any of these may complete

the family ceremony: blessing of a family library, of a family garden, of the parents' bedroom, of a particular room, or of a new car—such a blessing would be needed to protect the drivers from the risks on the road.

Enthronement of the Sacred Heart

We must note that today God is shut out from many hearts, families, official institutions, societies, international organizations and whole countries. Every household can offer the primary place in their individual and private lives, but also within the family life, social life and political life, to the Sacred Heart, the Lord and Master of all things, as this place of primary honor is due to Him. For this, the popes have recommended the enthronement of the Sacred Heart in households.

Christ Himself has asked this, speaking to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque in the following terms: “I will bring peace to their households. I will bless them in all their undertakings. I will especially bless the homes where the image of my Sacred Heart would be exposed and honored.”

The enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the home is a solemn ceremony that a priest

could do after blessing the home, with the entire family being present. Everyone must promise, following the text of the family consecration, to lead a devoutly Christian life, to faithfully accomplish all the duties that a Catholic is bound by, to offer an example of virtues and to have a particular devotion to the Sacred Heart. A framed beautiful image of the Sacred Heart, offering Himself to humanity, is then placed in a particular place of honor—a visible witness of the home's commitment to follow Christ.



Family Life Events

Remember also that the Church honors all that surrounds the family and the everyday life of Christians. She has crafted rites and prayers to solemnize and sanctify betrothals, motherhood, family anniversaries, sicknesses, blessings of children, etc. Nothing that concerns human love is vulgar or profane, but rather in the interest of the Kingdom of God—everything by Christ's will becomes an instrument of sanctity.

Earthly life and the world we live in have a meaning that God has revealed to us: "Whether you eat or you drink, and in everything that you do, do everything for the glory of God." (I Corinthians 10 :31). On this Earth we must build up the Kingdom of God, not just by our religious acts, but also by everyday activity in all its forms. There is nothing that our faith cannot make clearer.

Families Being Present to God

Therefore, let's finish by putting everything under the dominion of Christ and His Holy Mother. Let the parents finish the day with an excellent practice of making a sign of the cross on children's foreheads before going to bed—make God truly present in the everyday life of your home! ✠



*Tables of household items are ready to be blessed at the Blessing of Sacramentals, October 1st, 2022.
Holy Cross Chaplaincy, Fresno, California.*

FSSP ALLENTOWN RELOCATES TO HISTORIC BETHLEHEM CHURCH

Mass attendees at our Allentown apostolate have been experiencing increasingly cramped conditions over the last few years. Not arriving early enough meant you could well be standing for Mass in the narthex, barely a few steps in from the outside door.

With grateful thanksgiving to Almighty God, as of June 20, 2023, there is a new church home for our FSSP family in the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania. The community has relocated 15 minutes east of its current location and merged with the much larger Holy Ghost Church in Bethlehem, PA.

Holy Ghost was built in the early 1900s for the German-speaking Catholics of Bethlehem, under the leadership of pastor Rev. Aloysius Fretz. It was built in the *Rundbogenstil*, or “round arch style”, a Germanic variation of the 19th century Romanesque Revival that was vigorously promoted throughout the heavily Catholic Rhineland. Described as “cathedral-like” and “of striking artistic excellence”, the church features a 42’ baldachin topped with a life-size crucifix, beautiful stained glass windows imported from Munich, and an extensive collection of Austrian devotional statuary—the best of German Catholicism and a great testament to the strong faith of those immigrant families.

Fr. Gregory Pendergraft, FSSP will continue to serve the Lehigh Valley faithful as pastor of Holy Ghost, assisted by parochial vicar Fr. David Lopez, FSSP. In a letter to parishioners, Fr. Pendergraft expressed his hope that “our new combined parish will be one of great charity that will be in the words of Sacred Scripture a ‘beacon set upon a hill’ which will draw souls to worship and love God more deeply.”

Likewise, in his own letter announcing the merger to the members of Holy Ghost parish, the Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert, Bishop of Allentown, noted that the special charism of the FSSP to celebrate the ancient Latin Mass brought a historical continuity to the parish: “Fittingly, this is the same Mass attended by the German immigrants who built Holy Ghost and were its first parishioners.”

Bishop Schlert also thanked the parishioners for their faithfulness and prayers and concluded with an exhortation: “May you continue to shine the light of Christ in Bethlehem as you begin a new and vibrant chapter in the Parish’s rich history.” ✝



FSSP International Ordinations

On Saturday, June 10th, ten men from the Seminaire Saint-Pierre in Wigratzbad, Germany were ordained to the sacred priesthood by Bishop Betram Meier in the beautiful Benedictine abbey of Ottobeuren. The new priests hail from France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Two weeks later on June 24th, Our Lady of Guadalupe seminarian Nathan Pospischil was ordained to the sacred priesthood by the Most Rev. Richard Umbers in Sydney, Australia. Fr. Pospischil offered his first Solemn Mass the next day at Maternal Heart of Mary in Lewisham.



Opportunities to Support our Seminarians

Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary has two pressing needs. Our current mattresses are well past their lifetimes, and we need to replace them to ensure that our seminarians get a good night's sleep. We all know how hard it is to function and do one's duties without good quality sleep, and mattress quality can severely affect this. Help us purchase new mattresses for our seminarians! In all, the seminary needs to replace 112 mattresses. The estimated cost for good lasting options is about \$400 each, for an estimated total of \$44,800 to give the gift of rest to our hard-working seminarians.

We also have a great need for vehicles. The seminary tries to maintain enough working vehicles to ensure transportation for the seminarians' general needs, seminary-wide outings, and the seminarians' many summer assignments, such as summer camps. Recently we have had some of our mini-vans break down completely, beyond reasonable cost to reliably repair.

Would you consider making a gift to directly help the Seminary with these needs?

You can make your gift online, by mail, or by calling in to North American Headquarters.

www.fssp.com/dona-eis-requiem



For more details, or if you have a lightly-used vehicle you would like to donate, please email seminary business manager Dennis Kilcoyne at business@olgseminary.org with "mattress" or "vehicle" in the subject line.

Our Lady of the Cape Pilgrimage

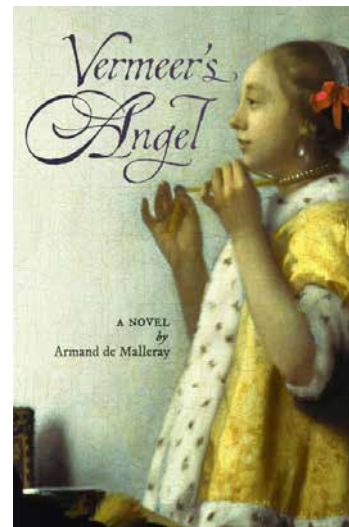
The Marie Reine du Canada pilgrimage to Canada's national Marian shrine, Our Lady of the Cape, will take place September 2-4. A lay-led endeavour based out of the FSSP's apostolate in Ottawa, St. Clement Parish, the pilgrimage is an annual three-day 100 KM (62 miles) trek in the footsteps of the North American Martyrs along Quebec's north shore of the St. Lawrence River. Much like the Pentecost pilgrimage to Chartres, pilgrims walk in chapters and carry banners while singing and praying, chaplains provide confession and spiritual direction en route, and all participants camp in tents. Priests celebrate the traditional Mass each day of the pilgrimage in parish churches along the route: in Berthierville, Yamachiche, and in the historic old shrine at Notre Dame du Cap, where upon the high altar stands the miraculous statue of Our Lady of the Cape, which opened its eyes on June 22, 1888, in the presence of (later Blessed) Fr. Frederic Janssoone, Fr. Luc Desilets, and a layman, Pierre Lacroix.

<https://mariereine.ca/>

Any questions about the pilgrimage can be directed to mariereineducanada@gmail.com. ✝

New Novel by Fr. De Malleray

Fr. Armand de Malleray, FSSP, superior of the English apostolate and rector of St. Mary's Shrine in Warrington, has written his first novel *Vermeer's Angel*. In the story, a deceased art expert seemingly reappears in Japan, upsetting the plans of priestly diplomats who fear that a schemer has stolen his identity. The book is now available from online booksellers such as Amazon and Barnes and Noble, as well as the publisher: www.aroucapress.com/vermeers-angel. ✝



A Ss. Peter and Paul Thank You

A special *thank you* to all who made our Ss. Peter and Paul Day of Giving and novena a huge success! We well exceeded our goal and received \$150,000 in matching gifts.

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Contact **Joe Gardner**, Director of Planned Giving, to find out how a Planned Gift might be part of your plans: (570) 319-5271, jgardner@fssp.com, or via mail at Provincial Headquarters.



As a Society of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right established by Pope St. John Paul II, our mission is to use the ancient liturgy as a wellspring to form our priests in the traditions of the Church to serve at the altar and in the parish to bring the fullness of Christ into the emptiness of the world.

Over the past 30 years, The Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter (FSSP) has ordained over 300 priests to bring the traditional Latin Mass and Sacraments to people around the world. In more than 50 cities across North America, we preach, teach, and sanctify faithful Catholics. And at Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary, we form over eighty seminarians to become the priests of tomorrow.