

Legacy of Consecrated Life in the Archdiocese

Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan, *People of God*, February 2015

Pope Francis has called for a Year for Consecrated Life in 2015. To show our appreciation for the ministry sisters, nuns, brothers and religious priests have provided since the inception of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe; I hosted a celebration for this special year which consisted of a Mass, speakers and a lunch on Monday, February 9. I am grateful to St. Jude Thaddeus Parish in Albuquerque which provided the use of their facilities for this event. And to the Serra Club for vocations who assisted with the funding.

Archbishop Jean Baptist Lamy, the first archbishop of Santa Fe (1875-1885), demonstrated great wisdom in seeking and bringing religious to this remote territory. He brought the Loretto Sisters, Christian Brothers and Jesuits to open schools. Sisters of Charity soon followed to open the first hospital in New Mexico - St. Vincent Hospital in Santa Fe. The Franciscans were present upon his arrival and had been here since 1539. All of these religious orders are still present in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe today!

During the tenure of Archbishop Jean Baptiste Salpointe (1885-1894) the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament opened St. Catherine's Indian School in Santa Fe. The school has since closed.

Archbishop Placid Louis Chapelle (1894-1897) had the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Kansas establish St. Anthony's Hospital in Las Vegas, NM. Sisters of Charity are still present in the archdiocese but the hospital is closed.

Archbishop Peter Bourgade (1899-1908) asked the Lafayette Franciscan Sisters to open mission schools in areas served by the Franciscan Friars. The Sisters of Charity founded St. Joseph Hospital and a school of nursing in Albuquerque; while the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother established St. Mary's Hospital in Roswell which was a part of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe at the time.

During his term as archbishop, Jean Baptiste Pitaval (1909-1918) introduced the Oblate Fathers of Texas to the extensive northeast part of the diocese and brought the Franciscan Sisters to found St. Anthony's Orphanage for boys in Albuquerque. Oblate fathers were present until the 1960s. The Franciscan sisters are still present but the orphanage closed and in 1971 the property was transferred to the U.S. Department of Labor for use as the Albuquerque Job Corps Center. He also recommended to the Holy See that a Franciscan be appointed to succeed him, since the Franciscans might be able to send much needed priests to the diocese.

The Holy See listened to Archbishop Pitaval and appointed a Franciscan as his successor! Archbishop Albert Thomas Daeger OFM (1919-1932) tenure brought the Sons of the Holy Family to Santa Cruz and the Servite fathers to Belen. The Jesuit fathers opened St. Francis Xavier Parish in Albuquerque. Several sisters' communities began work in the archdiocese: the Adrian and Grand Rapids Dominicans; the Sisters of Charity; the Ursuline Sisters of Maple Mount, KY and the Sisters of the Holy Family. The Missionary Catechists of Our Lady of Victory, the first society of religious women founded in the archdiocese, began their work in

1922. The Sisters of the Holy Family in Nazareth took charge of a seven-bed sanatorium in Clayton. In 1928 this Sanatorium was enlarged to a three-story, 25-bed St. Joseph Hospital; the Sisters of the Holy Family left Clayton in 1962. Sisters of Mercy arrived in Raton in 1922 and opened St. Patrick Parochial School and Our Lady of Mercy Parochial School as well as St. Patrick Academy in Springer. The Victory Noll sisters started their ministry in 1922 in Watrous, Ocate and Holman and opened a mission in Las Vegas. The Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena of Racine opened Our Lady of Guadalupe School in Santa Fe which closed in 1969.

Archbishop Rudolph Aloysius Gerken's tenure (1933-1943) saw the Franciscan Sisters of Colorado Springs open a Teachers College in Albuquerque that later became St. Joseph's on the Rio Grande University and then the University of Albuquerque. Now this land is home to the St. Pius X High School and the Catholic Center. The Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids established the Nazareth Sanatorium in Albuquerque and opened schools in Peñasco, Santa Cruz and San Juan Pueblo. The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth opened Holy Cross Hospital in Taos which is still operational although no longer a Catholic Hospital. Franciscan Sisters of Mary Immaculate arrived at the Montezuma Seminary in 1936 and prepared meals for 360 seminarians who arrived from Mexico during the religious persecution. They served until 1972 when the seminary closed.

During the term of Archbishop Vincent Edwin Byrne (1943-1963) the Medical Mission Sisters arrived in 1943 and opened the Santa Fe Maternity Institute which was one of the first four schools of nurse-midwifery in the United States. The Carmelite Nuns arrived in Santa Fe in 1945 and have since prayed for the needs of the church and in particular the needs of the archdiocese and its seminarians. Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs arrived in Abiquiu in 1946 and opened St. Thomas Parochial School in 1953 which remained open until 1975. The Kenosha Dominican Sisters arrived in 1947 to staff the St. Therese School in Albuquerque and remained until 1988. The school continues to operate. The Handmaids of the Precious Blood were founded in the archdiocese in 1947 and moved in 2014 to another diocese. Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston arrived in 1950 and taught at St. Rose School in Santa Rosa and Cristo Rey School in Santa Fe. Under the direction of the Brothers of Christian Schools St. Michael's High School grew into a four year college which operated until 2009. St. Michael's High School continues to prosper. In 1951 the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd opened the Good Shepherd Center and the Good Shepherd Manor. The manor is now closed but the center continues to serve homeless men and to provide alcohol addiction treatment. The Sisters of the Presentation opened St. Charles School in Albuquerque in 1951 and St. Anthony School in Pecos and also provided the founding principal for St. Pius X High School. The Servants of the Paraclete were founded in Jemez Springs and became an official congregation in 1952. Servant Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary opened Holy Ghost School in Albuquerque in 1953 and also taught at Assumption School. The Cisterian Fathers, popularly known as the Trappists, opened the Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe near Pecos and served in the archdiocese until 1955. The monastery was taken over by the Benedictines. The Dominicans took over the administration of the Aquinas Newman Center at UNM in 1957. The Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity (SOLTs) were found in Mora in 1958 and have operated a novitiate in Bosque since 1988. The Daughters of Charity of Canossa have ministered at Annunciation School in Albuquerque since 1961.

Archbishop James Peter Davis (1964-1974) reaped the benefits of his predecessors and welcomed the Sinsinawa Dominicans in 1969. Archbishop Davis is infamous for having moved the office of the archdiocese from Santa Fe to Albuquerque.

Archbishop Robert Fortune Sanchez (1974-1993) brought the Congregation of Saint Basil who provided a principal and some teachers for St. Pius X High School in Albuquerque. Five Norbertines were commissioned to the archdiocese in 1988 and they have recently established the Santa Maria de La Vid Abbey in Albuquerque. They continue to serve in parishes and hospital ministry. The Felician Franciscan Sisters moved their provincial headquarters from Oklahoma to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe in 1975. The Servants of the Blessed Sacrament arrived in 1983 and one served as principal of Cristo Rey School in Santa Fe.

Myself, Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan (1993-present) brought the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal to minister to the homeless, to spread devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to provide retreats for the youth. The Religious Sisters Filippini arrived and were instrumental in starting and administering St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School in Rio Rancho. In 2014, I was granted permission by the Vatican to open the Cause for the Canonization of Sister Blandina Segale, now referred to as Servant of God. She was a member of the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati and served in the archdiocese for 25 years. I can assure you that every archbishop of Santa Fe has depended on those dedicated to Consecrated Life for all forms of ministry. And I continue to do the same.

Where would the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, or the world for that matter, be without these men and women who have given their lives in service to the people of God? They have taught us in schools, ministered to the sick, served the poor, evangelized peoples everywhere, and have prayed day and night all for the salvation of souls. We thank these men and women as we celebrate the Year for Consecrated Life!