

HOWARD LIPIN

Joyous Calling

Newly ordained Father Daniel Holgren is applauded by his fellow priests of the Diocese of San Diego after his ordination June 11 at St. Michael's Parish in Poway.

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PRIESTLY FORMATION PROGRAM

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Priests, Religious Women Rise to Challenges

The Southern Cross



"A vocation flows from the heart of God and blossoms in the good soil of faithful people," Pope Francis tells us.

The priests and religious women and men serving across the Diocese of San Diego have continued to plant the seeds of God's love across the region, even as the coronavirus upended every facet of life in the last 20 months.

The U.S. Catholic Church observes National Vocation Awareness Week, Nov. 7 to 13, to foster an appreciation for all vocations and pray specifically for those discerning a vocation to ordained ministry and consecrated life.

Without a doubt, the COVID-19 pandemic challenged priests and religious men and women to find a way to continue to serve amid lockdowns and restrictions. They responded with creativity, compassion and a calming hand, even as they confronted their own fears and risked their own lives.

"I've never seen such human suffering in my entire life," said Father Lawrence Agi, a chaplain for 15 years who works at Scripps Mercy Hospitals in Hillcrest and Chula Vista.

Sister Madeline Fitzgerald, OSC, from the congregation of Sisters of St. Clare, reached out to RCIA candidates from St. Francis of Assisi Parish via Skype, text, email and Zoom video-conferencing. She was committed to finding a way to keep their spiritual growth going despite the restrictions.

Father Agi and Sister Fitzgerald are among 200 priests and 228 religious



The diocese's priests struggled to serve their communities amid the pandemic. As it gradually eases, they are gathering once more indoors, as they did on Oct. 17 for a special Mass at the Pastoral Center.



Sister Katia Chávez, SJS, turned to video to promote her order, the Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, during the pandemic.

sisters and brothers who serve in the San Diego Diocese. The priests include those of the diocese itself, from other dioceses and from religious orders; and the religious men and women include those based locally and those whose communities are based elsewhere.

This supplement highlights the contributions of a few of the religious orders that contribute to the diocese. Their members work tirelessly at parishes, schools, universities, religious organizations, prisons and jails, college campuses, nursing homes, and in other places where there is good soil to plant a seed of God's love.

'Shaping Wholesome Men, Not Just Holy Men'

The Southern Cross

What kind of life would give me the most fulfillment? Who inspires me? What would be most aligned with God's will for me?

For 24-year-old John Murcko, the answers to those questions took him to an "Explorer Day" to do what the name implies, begin to explore the vocation of priesthood.

That journey would lead him to being accepted last summer to the San Diego Diocese's Priestly Formation Program. In August, he moved into its house of formation, the St. Francis Center at the University of San Diego. He is taking philosophy and pre-theology classes and participates in daily religious activities as he discerns whether the priesthood is his true calling.

If his answer is "yes," and he meets all the requirements, he will attend the seminary at the Franciscan School of Theology, also at USD, where he will earn a master's in Divinity. Ordination would follow, about six years after he began the process.

"I had a deep feeling inside me, a desire to go to the seminary," he said one recent day before evening prayer and dinner with fellow seminarians.

"My parish priest set an example for me. He inspired me," he added, noting he attended St. Timothy Parish in Escondido, led by Father Fernando Ramirez.

Murcko is one of 16 men of diverse backgrounds who are in the diocese's Priestly Formation Program. It prepares the men for admission to the seminary



John Murcko, left, and Kyle Schanzenbach, participate in the diocese's Priestly Formation Program.

in four areas: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. Applicants complete a comprehensive process that includes attending monthly Masses and breakfasts; meetings with the directors of the program; a psychological assessment; and a criminal background check.

The program's participants attend the seminary housed at the Franciscan School of Theology instead of one out of town, as was the case previously.

"They will be well-prepared to tackle the challenges of the priesthood right here," said Father Lauro Minimo, director of Priestly Vocations.

Kyle Schanzenbach, 30, is in his fourth year of the program. He initially phoned Father Minimo to find out about the priestly formation program. Within minutes, Father Minimo was contacting him.

He is impressed that its directors focus on forming a person who is healthy in all aspects, not just the spiritual one.

"They have a strong focus on shaping wholesome men, not just holy men."

His recommendation for any man considering the priesthood? Go to Explorer Day or contact Father Minimo.

"It's completely worthwhile."

Diocese's Priestly Vocations Program: Father Lauro Minimo,
(619) 291-7446, lminimo@sdccatholic.org;
web: sdccatholic.org/vocations



Franciscans Are Part of San Diego's History

OFM A Franciscan friar, St. Junipero Serra, founded Mission San Diego de Alcalá in 1769, one of nine he established in California, bringing Catholicism to that vast region.

Today, Franciscans serve in 100 countries. They have a significant presence in the San Diego Diocese, with congregations of friars and sisters serving in parishes and ministries.

The order was founded by St. Francis of Assisi in the 13th century, after he abandoned a life of wealth to preach the Gospel and serve the poor. His writings have had a major influence in the Church, most recently playing a foundational role in the work of Pope Francis.

"St. Francis had great focus and love for the marginalized. He found meaning and joy in difficult work. We have a call to continue that," said Father Garrett Galvin, OFM, a regional leader in the Order of Friars Minor, one of three Franciscan orders in the Catholic Church, and the director of the Franciscan School of Theology.

A total of 15 Franciscan friars serve in the San Diego Diocese, in communities at Mission San Luis Rey, where the order has been present since 1885, and in central San Diego. Three friars serve the mission parish, including its



Father Sam Nasada, OFM, is associate pastor of Mission San Luis Rey Parish, which hosted the Blessing of the Animals on Oct. 2, 2021.

pastor, Father Oscar Mendez, OFM, while others serve in the cemetery and retreat house.

At Immaculate Conception Church in Old Town, Father Galvin serves as the parish administrator and Father Vincent Mesi, OFM, as the sacramental and spiritual leader.

A total of 11 Franciscan sisters serve in the diocese, including Sister Kathleen Warren, OSF, who directs its Office for Women Religious. Nine are from congregations in the United States and Mexico and two are Sisters of St. Clare, also part of the Franciscan family.

Order of Friars Minor

Founded: 1209 in Italy

Active in the San Diego Diocese: 252 years

San Diego Leader: Father Garrett Galvin, OFM

Website: sbfranciscans.org

Phone: (510) 536-3722

Vocation Information: sbfranciscans.org/be-a-friar

School Forms Tomorrow's Ministry Leaders



"Mission" is core to the identity of the Franciscan School of Theology.

The school "finds inspiration in the missionary zeal and educational heritage of St. Junipero Serra, who founded the first Franciscan mission" in San Diego, according to its website.

The school's roots date back to 1854, when its precursor opened at Mission Santa Barbara. And more recently, the school was housed at Mission San Luis Rey. These days, it's located at the University of San Diego, where it moved in 2019.

The FST is both a theology school and a seminary, which is used by the Diocese of San Diego for the intellectual formation of its seminarians. Other religious orders, like the Franciscans, also send their men there for this education.

The school offers a variety of graduate-level degrees, all grounded in Franciscan theology. Its mission is to prepare men and women for professional ministry in the Church, for careers in religious education, "and for living a life dedicated to solidarity with those on the margins of society," according to the website.

The degrees include a Master in Theological Studies, a Master in Arts, and a Master of Divinity, which has a



Lay students and seminarians attend Franciscan School of Theology courses at the University of San Diego. Left to right, Kyle Schanzenbach, Rosa Sanchez, Jesse Lopez and Anthony Jimenez are taking Introduction to Theology this fall.

lay track and one for seminarians.

The school's director, Father Garrett Galvin, OFM, said that though the school has a service and a curricular affiliation with USD, it is completely independent, with its own enrollment, accreditation and fundraising.

The affiliation allows FST students to take courses that USD offers, such as nonprofit management and counseling, useful today in ministry work, he said.

Father Galvin said that the school was able to tap USD's expertise with

online learning to be able to develop a completely online degree that started in September, the Master in Theological Studies: Franciscan Theology.

"This degree is the result of a great partnership between USD and the FST," he said. "We both contributed a lot to make this work."

He said the online degree is perfect for those individuals who can't attend traditional classes on campus for any number of reasons.

He added that the school is certified

to teach the online degree in 33 states.

In previous years, students from countries such as Korea, Vietnam and Mexico have studied at FST. The school also offers non-degree programs and continuing education courses.

Information about the Franciscan School of Theology is available online at fst.edu and by phone at (619) 374-7727.



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Nazareth House San Diego

Sisters of Nazareth | vocations@sistersofnazareth.us | sistersofnazareth.com

Sister Servants Lift San Diego Catholic Schools



The Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament (SJS), founded in Mexico, have been present in the San Diego region for 94 years.

The congregation has 30 members serving the San Diego Diocese, from Calexico to El Cajon to San Ysidro, and points in between. Their dual ministries are the daily adoration of the Holy Eucharist and the religious education of children and youth.

The congregation was founded by Father Silviano Carrillo in Ciudad Guzmán, Jalisco state, Mexico, in 1904. Today, its members serve not only across Mexico but in Guatemala, Peru, Chile, and the United States.

“Father Carrillo was a strong believer in education because that’s how people can get a better life,” said Sister Adriana Rebeca Zuro, SJS, superior for the Immaculate Conception Province, based in Bonita.

The congregation significantly contributes to San Diego Catholic schools, serving as principals, administrators and teachers.

The sisters first arrived in Calexico in 1927 and today they lead two schools there, Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy and Vincent Memorial Catholic High School. The congregation also administers Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in San Ysidro.

And it has a presence in El Cajon,



The Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament marked the 115th anniversary of the founding of their congregation with a Mass on Oct. 12, 2019, at Corpus Christi Church in Bonita.

where its Silviano Carrillo Center offers instruction in English and citizenship.

The community has three locations in Bonita: the provincial house, a formation house and a newly established retirement center.

The congregation offers an opportunity to explore religious life on Fridays, from 6 to 7 p.m., via Zoom, and in English and Spanish.

“We’re sister servants, devoted to the Eucharist,” said Sister Zuro. “Our service is to educate, to serve and to love.”

Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament

Founded: 1904 in Ciudad Guzmán, Mexico

Active in the San Diego region: 94 years

San Diego Leader: Sister Rebeca Zuro, SJS, provincial superior

Website: usasjs.org

Phone: (619) 267-0720

Vocation Information: Sister Katia Chávez, SJS
svocations@usasjs.org, (619) 292-2971



Discalced Carmelites



Members of the Discalced Carmelites congregation met with Auxiliary Bishop Ramón Bejarano in October 2020. The order was established in the 16th century by St. Teresa of Ávila and St. John of the Cross. Carmelites trace their roots and their name to Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. “Discalced” is derived from Latin and means “without shoes.”

In the San Diego Diocese, this community of sisters lives in a convent, dedicating their days to silent, solitary prayer, “striving each day to help one another grow in love and joy, depth and devotion as we journey toward our goal: union with God.” More information is available on their website, carmelsandiego.com, and at (619) 280-5424.

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Jesuits Are in a Class of Their Own



The Society of Jesus is the largest men's religious order in the world, with around 16,000 priests and brothers, many of whom work in education.

The Society was founded in the 16th century by St. Ignatius of Loyola, a soldier who had a profound religious transformation after being wounded and became a priest and theologian. The Jesuits became a leading force in modernizing the Church.

In the San Diego region, the Jesuits have served at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Barrio Logan for 81 years. Three minister the congregation, including Father Martin Silva, SJ, its pastor. A fourth serves as the principal of Our Lady's School.

They are part of the 12-member Jesuit contingent who work within the diocese. They are led by Father Joaquin Martinez, SJ, president of Mater Dei Catholic High School.

The others include two Jesuits who serve in the Neuman Center at UC San Diego, and Father Kevin Casey, SJ, a long-time priest in the diocese who currently serves as St. Mark's Parish.

Two Society members work in diocesan administration, Father Eduardo Samaniego, SJ, the director of the Office for the Permanent Diaconate, and Father Michael Ravenkamp, SJ, who



Father Martin Silva, SJ, led an interfaith prayer during a vigil in San Diego on June 28 asking for Congress to pass immigration reform. One of the core preferences of the Society of Jesus is to walk with the excluded.

works in the Tribunal.

"The central character of the Society is availability for mission, whatever we are asked to do, that is our mission," Father Martinez explained.

In 2019, the Society announced four new core preferences that would guide its mission for the next 10 years: to show the way to God through spiritual exercises; to journey with youth; to walk with the excluded; and to care for our common home.

Pope Francis approved them. After all, he is the first Jesuit pope.

Society of Jesus

Founded: 1540 in France

Active in the San Diego Region: 81 years

San Diego Leader: Father Joaquin Martinez, SJ

Website: jesuitswest.org

Phone: (503) 226-6977

Vocation Information: beajesuit.org, Jesuit Vocations (YouTube)

Order of St. Augustine to Mark 100 Years in San Diego



"We've been in San Diego longer than San Diego's been a diocese," said Father Gary Sanders, OSA, provincial of the Province of St. Augustine in California. (The Diocese of San Diego wasn't created until 1936.)

The Augustinians can trace their history back to the mid-13th century when various groups that were living according to the Rule of St. Augustine were united into a single community. The rule is an outline for communal living developed by St. Augustine of Hippo in the fifth century.

Today, there are about 2,800 Augustinians worldwide in almost 50 countries. The California province has more than 35 members, most of whom live in San Diego. With its members hailing from nine countries, Father Sanders said, the province is "a wonderful microcosm" of the world itself.

He likened his province's membership to an hourglass: At the top are its elderly members; at the center is a smaller number of middle-aged Augustinians; and, at the bottom, are about as many younger members — priests, brothers and seminarians — as there are older members.

In the diocese, the Augustinians are closely associated with St. Augustine High School, an all-boys secondary



Bishop Robert McElroy ordained Maxime Villeneuve, right, to the priesthood and Nicholas Porter, left, to the transitional diaconate Dec. 15, 2018, at St. Patrick Church in San Diego's North Park neighborhood.

school in North Park, which they founded in 1922. But they also have pastored neighboring St. Patrick Parish.

The California province has sponsored Casa Hogar La Gloria, an orphanage in Tijuana, since 1975. Meanwhile, the St. Augustine Foundation disburses about \$1 million a year to charitable causes.

"Augustine was a big promoter of spiritual friendship and community life," said Father Sanders. "That sense of brotherhood is present in the way we live and, hopefully, the way we treat other people."

The Order of St. Augustine

Founded: 1244 in Tuscany

Active in San Diego Region: 99 years

San Diego Leader: Father Gary Sanders, OSA

Website: californiaaugustinians.org

Phone: (619) 235-0247

Vocation Information: Vocations@CalAugustine.org



Joyous Encounter

Members of the Women's Religious Council in the San Diego Diocese attended a special Mass on Oct. 17 at the diocesan Pastoral Center to mark the beginning of a global consultation of Catholics. There are 187 vowed religious women from 34 congregations in the diocese. Three congregations work in the Imperial Valley – the Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, the Sisters of the Incarnate Word,

and Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters. In the photo, left to right, are Sister Vera Chan, CSN; Sister Mary O'Connor, RSM; Bishop Robert McElroy; Sister Guadalupe Valdez, SSND; Sister Uchenna Oluoha, RSCJ; Sister Katia Chávez, SJS; and Sister Kathleen Warren, OSF. More information is available online at sdcatholic.org/office-for/women-religious and by phone at (858) 490-8289.

Sisters of Nazareth's Service Is Ageless



The Sisters of Nazareth have a long history of caring for both young and old.

That history began with Victoire Larmenier, then a novice with the Little Sisters of the Poor in Rennes, France. She was sent to London in 1851 as part of a small group of religious sisters, who were entrusted with starting a new foundation.

The sisters opened the first Nazareth House in Hammersmith, England, in late 1857, where they served the elderly poor. By that time, they also had begun caring for poor and infirm children.

With the permission of the Holy See, the Hammersmith community separated from the Little Sisters of the Poor in 1861 and, three years later, was recognized as a new religious community called the Sisters of Nazareth. Larmenier, who would take the name Mother St. Basil, is remembered as its foundress and first superior general.

There are currently just over 200 Sisters of Nazareth worldwide. They minister to the elderly at Nazareth Houses, Catholic assisted living communities that welcome people of all faiths; there are 37 worldwide, including one in San Diego. They are also engaged in the education of children, as well as in caring for abandoned children in Africa.



The staff of Nazareth House in San Diego, including Sister Rose Hoye, center, celebrated the birthday of resident Mary Kapalla on June 14, 2021.

In 2024, the Sisters of Nazareth will celebrate the 100th anniversary of their arrival in the United States. They first settled in San Diego, where they built and operated an orphanage at the site of Mission San Diego de Alcalá. In the mid-1970s, the orphanage transitioned into Nazareth School, a private Catholic elementary school.

Five Sisters of Nazareth are still in active ministry in the San Diego Diocese, with another three now retired and in assisted living at Nazareth House.

The Sisters of Nazareth

Founded: 1864 in Hammersmith, England

Active in San Diego Region: 98 years

American Superior of the Nazareth Houses in America:
Sister Rose Hoye, CSN

Website: sistersofnazareth.com

Vocation Information: srcelestina.faletoi@sistersofnazareth.us
or (559) 977-0359

Society of Divine Word Priests Lead Four Parishes



The Society of the Divine Word (SVD) was founded 146 years ago by a German diocesan priest, St. Arnold Janssen, as a missionary order.

Today, its members are active in about 80 countries, with more than 6,000 missionaries across the globe.

Within 20 years of the order's founding, Divine Word Missionaries were already serving in the United States, including ministry among the African American population.

In 1923, the Society opened a seminary in Mississippi to form African American men as priests and brothers. The religious order later made history in 1966, when Father Harold R. Perry, SVD, was named the auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, becoming the first known African American bishop. (A late 19th-century bishop was of mixed race but identified as white.)

The Society's Western Province USA, which is headquartered in Riverside, Calif., and includes the Diocese of San Diego as well as five other dioceses, was established in 1964. It currently includes about 60 missionaries representing 19 nationalities.

The Society has had a consistent presence in the diocese for the past 14 years, said Father Soney Sebastian, SVD, who previously served as



Society of the Divine Word missionaries attended a Mass to honor St. Kateri Tekakwitha at Barona Shrine on July 23. On hand were Father Benjamin Le, SVD, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish; Father Yori Sodanango, SVD, Blessed Sacrament Parish; Father Herman Manuel, SVD, St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish; Father Raymundus Wea, SVD, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish; and Father Soney Sebastian, SVD, director of the diocesan Office for the Missions.

provincial for six years. Currently, nine Divine Word Missionaries reside within its boundaries.

Among them are the pastors of four local parishes — Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Blessed Sacrament, St. John the Evangelist (San Diego) and St. Kateri Tekakwitha — as well as a hospital chaplain and the director of the diocesan Office for the Missions, who is Father Sebastian.

"Our name is our mission," Father Sebastian said of the Society. "We bring the Divine Word to others."

Society of the Divine Word

Founded: 1875 in the Netherlands

Active in San Diego Region: Latest stint began 14 years ago

District Superior for San Diego: Father Herman Manuel, SVD

Website: svdusw.org

Phone: (951) 687-7600

Vocation Information: svdvocations.org

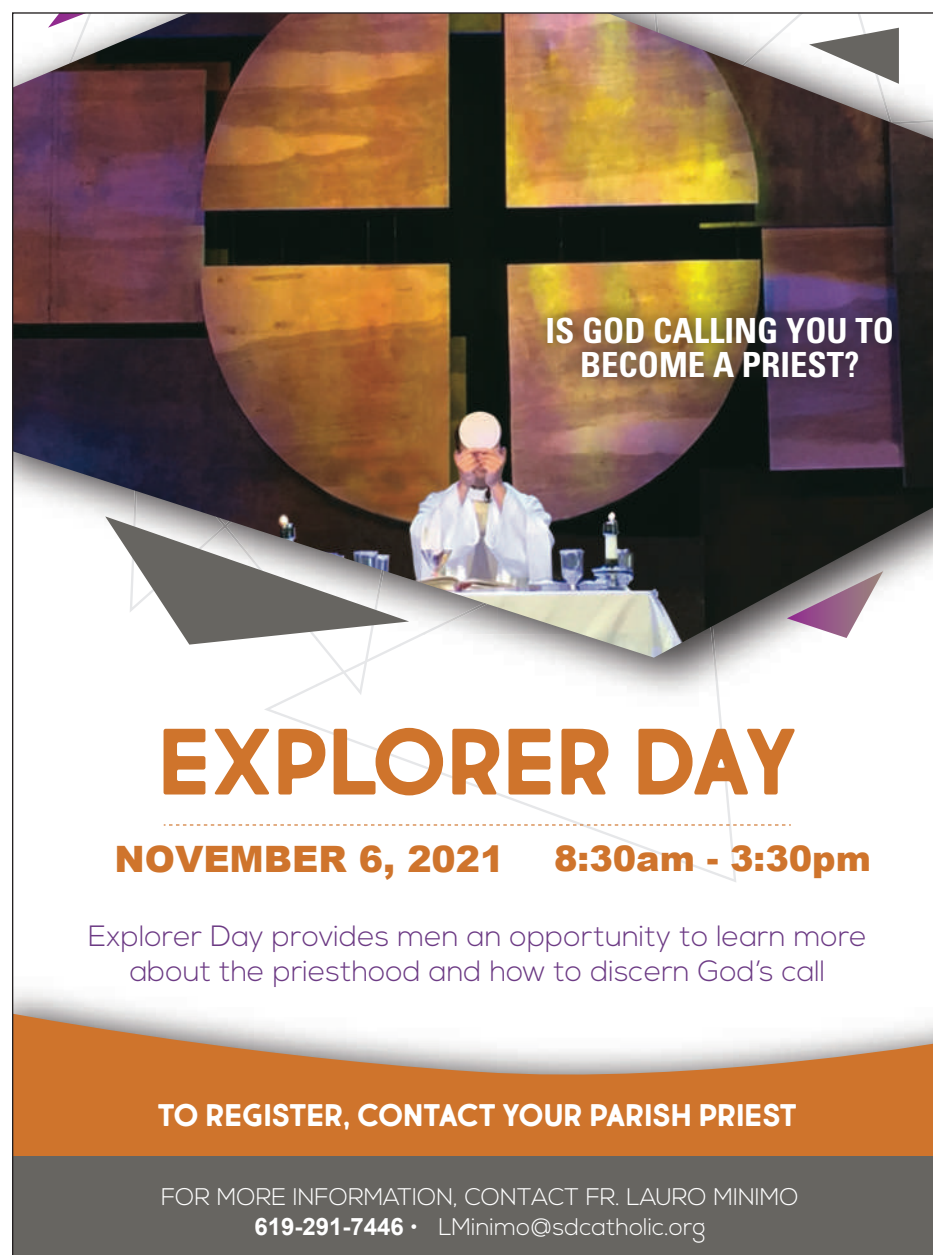


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— St. Therese of Lisieux

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'MCs' Help Poorest on Both Sides of Border



In 1991, Mother Teresa of Calcutta visited the San Diego-Baja California region. A year later, she opened a home for four members of the order she had founded, the Missionaries of Charity. It was located in Southcrest, a neighborhood of dilapidated houses and apartments whose residents were struggling to live.

After all, the Missionaries' focus is embracing the poor.

These days, the sisters no longer live in those first small bungalows. In March of 2017, they moved into an 8,000-foot convent custom-built for them by a Catholic philanthropist family.

Around 18 sisters live there. They are from the contemplative branch of the Missionaries, devoting much of their day to prayer. They also are active participants in the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Jude Shrine of the West Parish, about a block away from their convent.

The Missionaries of Charity have a significant presence south of the border. They help the poor, single mothers, terminally ill patients and the homeless at locations in Tijuana and Rosarito Beach, the neediest populations St. Teresa of Calcutta aimed to reach and tenderly help.

They are part of an order with about 5,100 members serving in more than



Missionaries of Charity held a special Mass on March 6, 2017, to bless the opening of a new, spacious convent in San Diego. The multicultural congregation in San Diego dedicates its days mostly to prayer.

130 countries. They include active and contemplative sisters and brothers; and fathers, a clerical religious community.

Mother Teresa was canonized on Sept. 4, 2016 by Pope Francis.

"Her mission to the urban and existential peripheries remains for us today an eloquent witness to God's closeness to the poorest of the poor," he said at a ceremony. "Today, I pass on this emblematic figure of womanhood and of consecrated life to the whole world of volunteers: May she be your model of holiness!"

Missionaries of Charity

Founded: 1950 in India by St. Teresa of Calcutta

Active in the San Diego Region: 30 years

San Diego Leader: Sister Ancy Kollikolavil, MC

Website: motherteresa.org

Phone: (650) 355-3091

Vocation Information: Missionaries of Charity
1070 Union Avenue, Bronx, NY 10459

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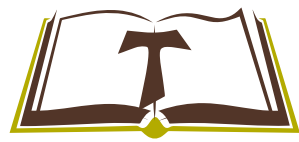
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