

Marianist Community -- 22683 Alcalde Road -- Cupertino, CA 95014
Telephone: 408-207-4847//309-4178 – E-Mail: STutas@aol.com

June 2010

Greetings from Cupertino!

The rainy season has passed! Spring (or is it summer) has arrived! I am writing on the Feast of the Sacred Heart – one of those four days in the year when we Marianists throughout the world pray in a special way for all those whose lives we touch. It is also Kamehameha Day, so I am especially mindful of my fellow brothers and friends in Hawaii. In this letter I want to give you another glimpse of life here in Cupertino and a note or two about my last visit to Saint Louis. As most of you know, I have been going to Saint Louis for meetings the past three years. There I experienced the freshness of autumn, the snows of winter, the thunderstorms of spring and the warmth of summer – and the gracious hospitality of the Maryland Avenue Marianist community, my home away from home. I arrived in Saint Louis the evening of May 1. The next day I was celebrant for the community Mass and then took my 77-minute walk in Forest Park, joining cheerful Sunday hikers and dodging aggressive bikers. It had been six weeks since my last visit.

My first surprise was on Maryland Avenue where I noted that Bro. Mel Meyer's magnificent sculpture had disappeared. Upon inquiry I learned that it had been put away for next winter and replaced by the usual water fountain and soothing music. Further on I saw huge sidewalk flower boxes featuring spring beauty at the Maryland Plaza hotel. Upon entering Forest Park I admired the giant fountain in full splendor and I marveled at the many different shades of green now adorning trees that were bare the last time I saw them. I enjoyed the broad Midwestern smiles and pitied the grim bikers and joggers. There were many damsels, but only one in distress – a young lady who was upset when a car failed to yield as she attempted to cross the road. Moreover, when the driver yelled at her, there was a rapid exchange of expletives, but no bodily harm – although she pounded furiously on the car! Perhaps both had been distracted, as I was, by the sight of three persons across the way gliding along blissfully on those people movers called Segways. Further on I discovered two new massive lunch tables, clearly marked (as though anyone would dare haul them away!) Nearly everyone was wearing Cardinal Red. That prepared me somewhat for the nasty beating the Cincinnati Reds suffered that afternoon at the hands of the Cardinals. The day ended positively, however, with a wonderful dinner visit.

Monday morning we began our prayer by singing heartily *When Morning Fills the Sky* from what Bro. Howard modestly calls "The Little Hughes Book!" (In Cupertino we also use what I call "The Big Red Hughes Book!" – the bulky WORSHIP hymnal). Later I walked over to the office to greet the devoted staff and picked up more papers for the meetings. The week in Saint Louis went smoothly, inspired by prayerful liturgies, beautiful weather and spring flowers. For this

visit the unhurried schedule allowed time for leisurely visits and reflective walks. The meetings were especially productive as we worked to finalize personnel decisions and leave the house in order for the new Provincial Council to take over. Besides the lively meals at the Marianist residence I met with a few people for lunch or dinner, including a Cinco de Mayo celebration at the office.

After our last meeting we had Mass and dinner together and the next day, May 7, I returned to Cupertino and learned that I had missed the May 1 celebration: May Day, Lei Day, and Weigh-in Day – also the celebration of Saint Joseph the Worker and the beginning of our monthly novena to ask for the canonization of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade. I also missed the diocesan celebration on May 2 honoring Women Religious. Several of our men attended this tribute and expression of support. For Cinco de Mayo there had been a great party, despite a shutdown in electricity for several hours. Fr. Jim Mifsud has had some setbacks, but he is still faithful to his motto “Never Give Up” which he used over the years to encourage others. Now he leads by example. Bro. Bob Wade is justly proud of the way he has come through open heart surgery and successive surgeries since last July. Now the nurses accompany him on short (and noisy) walks twice a day. Fr. Jim Imhof has a new ailment to be concerned about: vertigo, but he, too, is a trooper and rides his motorized chair with abandon inside and out.

Best of all is Bro. Pat McMahon who is recuperating from a nasty fall. Upon my return to Cupertino I was told to be prepared for a shock when visiting Bro. Pat who had just come back from the hospital. One of the nurses had warned him not to go outside at night because the raccoons were sure to hail him as their new leader. In falling he not only broke both shoulders, but also gained two very black eyes! It is amazing, however, to see how well Bro. Pat has been coping with all this. Bro. Paul Fennelly had a brief moment when he was able to get around with a walker, but is again wheelchair bound. He, too, is a model of coping positively. Meanwhile, Fr. Larry Mann cruises from his room to the chapel and dining room in his recliner – and delights us with his one-liners.

As the Easter Season came to an end, the Paschal Candle and Easter Water Bowl were put away for another season. The Easter lilies were replaced by other plants and flowers. May was above all a month of birthdays! Bro. Paul Fennelly (9), Bro. Frank Spaeth (17), Bro. Joseph Nu’uanu (19), Fr. Dan Triulzi (21), Bro. Gene Frank (23, on Pentecost Sunday) Fr. Bob Hertweck (25), Fr. Bill O’Connell (27). Trinity Sunday, May 30, was also the birthday of Ms. Nancy Romano who makes attractive birthday posters to accompany the balloons that appear in the dining room and at the individual’s room. We also remembered Fr. Marty Solma, our future provincial, and Bro. Tom Suda, who helped build our home. Both had birthdays on May 18.

We celebrated the feast of Saint Damien of Molokai on the 10th. There were five Marian feasts: Mary, Mediatrix (12) and Mary, Help of Christians (25, Foundation Day for our Marianist Sisters). Feast of Our Lady of Fatima (13) was also special, for on that date the diocesan tribunal in Saint Louis began the official study of a miraculous recovery attributed to Blessed William Joseph

Chaminade. We closed out the month by combining our celebration of the Feast of the Visitation of Mary with our observance of Memorial Day – with our flag at half-mast. We even observed the anniversary of Blessed Chaminade’s ordination (May 14) just before the celebration of the Ascension of the Lord on May 16. Guests included Bro. Bernard Ploeger, Ms. Kay Stone, Fr. Pat McDaid and Sister Margarita Byron, FCJ.

Several attended the testimonial dinner in San Francisco for Fr. Tom French, SM who is leaving Riordan High School after having served there 12 years, the last five as president. Ms. Nancy Romano scheduled classic movies and outings, including the first campfire of the season. Bro. Tom Deasy is one of our homilists and his dry humor keeps us alert. The other day in reflecting on the difficult life of a saint his parting line was: “Consolations are also accepted.” One of the more original homilies came from Fr. Jim Imhof who explained why he lit the cabinet enshrining the Holy Oils. Fr. Joe Stefanelli shared more insights on Blessed Chaminade. A few weeks ago I noted that the stone marker for the grave in which Fr. Jorge da Silva and Fr. Tom Hogan are buried is now in place. In my collection of anecdotes about Aging with Grace, I added this comment from Bro. Gene Frank: “I believe everything anybody tells me.” Pause. “And then I forget!” Bro. Charles comes to chapel and the dining room regularly, but when I see his door open I drop in for a few minutes. He was sitting by the window and pulled back the curtain to admire the evening light and said he would like to go out for a walk – “and never come back!” “Why would you want to do that? We need you!” And then the mischievous reply: “For what?” The next morning he greeted me with a broad smile, so I knew he was ready to live again!

I receive *The New York Times* headlines by e-mail and the last item is always a note about the anniversary of the day, so at breakfast I quiz the others. The other day it was the anniversary of the death of Helen Keller in 1968. Noting that she had been blind and deaf, Fr. Larry commented “she must have had a peaceful life!” When I asked him why he didn’t wear his glasses in the dining room: “I don’t want to see what I’m eating!” Our community and the community at the Marianist Residence in San Antonio have a similar problem dealing with fish-eating herons! Here, Bro. Howard speaks gently to the birds and our fish survive. In San Antonio, it took Bro. Jim Jaeckle’s rifle to save the fish! In our discussion of herons and crows and other birds, Fr. Larry revealed that he had been a bird watcher earlier in life. “What birds?” I asked. “Jailbirds!” (referring to his ministry in jails.) What Fr. Larry – and Fr. Jim Mifsud – did in the past, Bro. Howard does by an ongoing correspondence with several inmates. On June 23 I am going to Dayton and Louisville. I am scheduled to return on July 14. Be assured I am with you in thought and prayer, grateful that we are companions on the journey.