

February 2022

Passionist News Notes

St. Paul of the Cross Province



Altar Dedication: St. Paul of the Cross in Pittsburgh, PA



Bishop Zubik and Auxiliary Bishops Winter and Waltersheid concelebrated with Fr. James O’Shea, C. P., Provincial, Fr. Justin Kerber, Rector, and our Passionist Community, along with 2 Diocesan priests. The Dedication ceremony took place within the Mass on the Feast of our Founder, St. Paul of the Cross, October 20, 2021. The altar was bare and relics of all Passionist Saints were presented and sealed inside it. Bishop Zubik anointed the top of the altar with Chrism. Four women selected from among our Altar Guild and Associates wiped up the Chrism with new white towels. Bishop Zubik lit new fire burning in a large bowl and then incensed the altar. He invited the congregation to come forward to touch the altar: it was a very emotional experience for many. The new altar cloth was placed and candles were brought in and lit. The rest of the Mass continued. A reception in the Retreat House dining room followed. The only regret that we had that day was that the building could not hold all 2,700 of our generous donors but **you were all with us** in the Spirit

Day	Birthday
2	Gaston Nsongolo
7	Terence Kristofak
	Claudio Piccinini
11	Augustine Lowe
15	Theophane Cooney
17	Moises Rios Ruiz
20	Thomas Bonacci
26	Robin Ryan



Day	Ordained
28	MOCCIA, Bonaventure

Letter from Fr Rick—"Epiphany, and the flight into Egypt"

Dear family and friends,

While quietly crossing the threshold from a most difficult year into a (hopefully) better year, I lit a simple fire in an old tire rim, and with Orion twinkling in the darkness above, I contemplated the religious icon that accompanies these words.

Mary and Joseph are exhausted, thick shadows haunt their soulful eyes which are apprehensive with sadness and worry.

They lean into one other, as if each would fall over without the other.

The child Jesus is placed in between them, like the ballast keeping them upright.

His face reveals that he is absorbing the trouble in the hearts of his mother and father.

Yet a golden light surrounds his countenance, as he looks directly at you, at me.

The greek letters in the golden glow reveal his name: "I AM" (Exodus 3:14).

Big credentials for a small, troubled boy.

He is speaking to us with the gesture of his right hand, a "hand speak" as precise in icons, as it is in signing with the deaf.

This is an exhausted refugee family, having gone overnight from being visited by Kings, to running for their lives.

We know too well the bloody reasons for their exile.

Two thousand years have past, and still today thus is life for far too many families.

Whole families, throughout the world. Their faces blend into the same sorrowful, but blessed, togetherness of this icon:

Families of Haitians in the jungles of the Darien gap,
families of Syrians in Turkey,
of Afghans in Pakistan
of Sudanese in Congo,
families who perish altogether in the Mediterranean Sea.

These anguished families number 82 million people today, as we live and breathe and begin a new year.

Most of these refugees are women and children, fleeing violence and death in their homelands.

Pope Francis referred to their plight in his Christmas message, as a massive and forgotten human tragedy.

"These nightmares never seem to end, and by now we hardly even notice them.

We have become so used to them, that immense tragedies are being passed over in silence."

(Urbi et Orbi, Christmas 2021)

There are also other kinds of refugees: their lives are marked by "The flight into virtual."

The flight of many people from their own humanity, from deep human bonds, has become for us a plague.

Alarms are sounding about the mental health of children and young adults, because of lives spent virtually streaming or gaming.

Much concerned attention is now paid to the tragic "devolution" of the human being.

People are losing the art of how to befriend and mature in friendship, how to define yourself with healthy boundaries and respect the boundaries of others, how to both compete with rivals and challenge opponents in a healthy way.

We see the consequences.

Often, the flight into virtual is the flight into emptiness, and then the flight into big trouble, as you try to deal with the emptiness.

Pornography, gambling, dark chat groups, movements against the values and principles that make us able to live in a civil and civilized way, sites that enable, rather than challenge, tendencies to baseness, racism, and falsehood.

If the emptiness gets to you, and you are thinking of suicide, the dark side of the web will encourage you to just "go ahead," and even offer suggestions to help you end your life.

In relation to truth, and its liberating discovery and unfolding, we rather live in a time of gaslighting, of smoke and mirrors, of fierceness in encounters, of intense division and hatred.

The tragic flight is from humanity itself.

Yet, as we flee from our very humanity, we celebrate at Christmastide the awesome wonder that God entered into it gladly, in order to awaken within us all the best angels of our human nature.

This is a hopeful cause for joy, especially as we begin a new year of intense challenges.

Humanity in Haiti is also at a very low ebb, as many of you know from following the news.

A lot of our time now is spent

trying helping relocate internal refugees from city wide violence (especially in Martissant), trying to help kidnapped people get freed unharmed (at present, two Catholic seminarians),

trying to help the homeless rebuild their lives (the earthquake in the south was only five months ago),

trying to help bind the wounds of victims of armed bandits (a Catholic priest was shot yesterday in Miragoane)

trying to grieve and help bury those who did not survive armed assaults (on Saturday, we will bury Marco, who grew up in our NPH homes and worked as a "blood runner," getting blood from the Red Cross for our hospitalized patients.)

And, of course, trying to keep our normal work going.

The Pope is right. We are too used to the atrocities. The overriding reaction is silence.

Bishop Dumas wrote a strong condemnation, lament, and call to action on the shooting of Fr Francois, as has been done many times by the Bishops of Haiti.

The usual response is the sound of crickets. As the saying goes, "it is what it is."

But people of good will, and people of faith, cannot stop there. "It is what we are allowing it be."

And we need to work hard to change it.

With many of you, we will fight with all our ability to change what should not be, what should never, ever have become "what it is."

This year in Haiti, people on the street don't say "have a good year" (Bon ané). Instead they say "have a good battle" (Bon kombat).

Everyone here squarely knows what they are up against.

These phrase "Bon Kombat" echos the words of St Paul:

"I have fought the good fight, I have run to good race," (2 Timothy 4:7)

The good fight will not leave you looking (or walking) like you did in your prime.

The good race will guarantee your intimate knowledge of the loneliness of the long distance runner.

But St Paul finishes by saying, "I have kept the faith."

This is a great New Year's resolution, wish and prayer:

May we keep the faith

in our humanity,
in ourselves,
in each other,
in what we can create together,
and in God.

Blessings of peace, strength, courage and wisdom for you and your families, in a new year of challenges.

Thank you for your generous and precious help over many years,

Fr Richard Frechette CP DO

January 6, 2022

Death of Fr. Gregory Paul, C.P.

Dear Fathers, Brothers, Associates, and Friends,

It is with great sadness that I inform you that Fr. Gregory Paul, C.P. died on December 30, 2021 at McLean Skilled Care in Simsbury, Ct.

Arrangements for his wake and funeral are as follows:

Wake: Tuesday, January 4, 2022 – 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Funeral: Tuesday, January 4, 2022 – 11:00 am
Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center
West Hartford, CT

Burial: Holy Family Passionist Cemetery



Rev. Gregory Paul, C.P.

Born: March 28, 1928 – Norwood, MA

First Profession: July 17, 1951 – Pittsburgh, PA

Ordination: April 25 1958 – Union City, NJ

In Christ Crucified and Risen,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jim O'Shea', written in a cursive style.

Jim O'Shea, C.P., Provincial. St. Paul of the Cross Province

Fr. Gregory Paul, C.P., died peacefully on December 30, 2021, at McLean Health Center in Simsbury, Connecticut. Born Anthony R. Paul in Norwood, Massachusetts, on March 28, 1928, he was the son of the late James Paul and Jessie Guarino Paul. He entered the Passionist Community and made his profession as a Passionist on July 17, 1951, taking the name and title: Gregory of the Seven Dolors. He was ordained a priest in Union City, New Jersey, on April 25, 1958, and began what would be the first of many assignments at Passionist parishes throughout the Province. His first assignment was at St. Gabriel's Parish in Toronto, Canada. Then came assignments as assistant pastor at St. Ann's Parish in Scranton, Pennsylvania, St. Mary's Parish in Dunkirk, New York, St. Paul of the Cross Parish in Atlanta, Georgia, then pastor for eight years at St. Joseph Parish in Baltimore, Maryland. Fr. Gregory was next assigned to the Spanish apostolate at St. Michael's Parish in Union City, New Jersey. After six years in Union City, Fr. Gregory returned to Baltimore for another ten years as pastor and became involved with ministry to the blind. For many years he attended the annual convention of the American Foundation for the Blind. Wherever he served, Fr. Gregory was known for his caring, compassionate manner, hope-filled wisdom, and generous sharing of his time and talents.

In 2002, when his brother, Fr. Alexis Paul, also a Passionist, was diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer, Fr. Gregory came to West Hartford, Connecticut, to care for him. Nine months later Fr. Alexis died, and after his death Fr. Gregory began to assist with the ministry of retreats at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford. While on the retreat team, Fr. Gregory was part of the Pastoral Care Team at UConn/John Dempsey Hospital. He often responded to emergencies day and night and never complained about being awakened in the middle of the night. He took it all in stride. Fr. Gregory had a fine rapport with the doctors, nurses and patients at UConn and was a wonderful, caring emissary for Holy Family, welcoming many retreatants with cordial hospitality at the Retreat Center each week. He also assisted with masses for several years at St. Mary Home in West Hartford and at local parishes when needed. He was happy to help whenever he was called upon and did everything with a warm smile and a cheery sense of humor. He made a point of calling everyone by name – though not always the correct name! He will be missed by his Passionist brothers, especially Fr. Terry Kristofak, his primary caregiver, and all those who knew him as a gentle soul and a fine priest of God.

Fr. Gregory is survived by his sister, Rita Higgins, her son, Edward Higgins, his wife Kathy and their daughter, Jennifer and her husband, Jeff Malone, and their two children, Alexander and Samantha. Fr. Gregory is also survived by his twin brother, Frank Paul and his wife Maeve, their children, Julie and her husband, Gregory Pinto, and their three children Josh, David and Charlotte, Gregory, his wife, Leila Joseffer, and their two children, Charlie and Margaret, and Stephen, his wife Rebecca Peterson, and their two children, Grace and Jack.

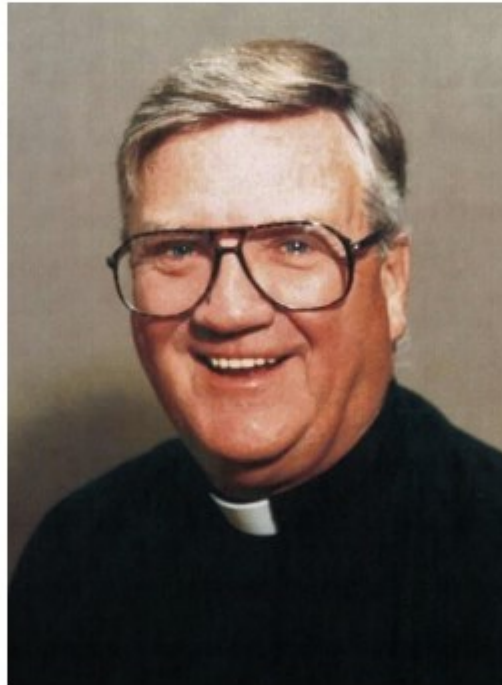
The funeral will take place at Holy Family Passionist Monastery on Tuesday, January 4, 2022, at 11:00 AM, with calling hours beforehand at the Monastery from 9:00 AM until 10:45 AM. Masks will be worn throughout the wake and services. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Fr. Gregory's memory to Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center, 303 Tunxis Road, West Hartford CT 06107.

Death of Fr. Paul Cusak, C.P.

Fr. Paul Cusack, CP

Arrangements for the wake and funeral are as follows:

- Wake:** Monday, January 3, 2022 – 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Kane- Jerrett Funeral Home (8088 Yonge St, Thornhill, ON)
- Funeral:** Tuesday, January 4, 2022 – 11:00 am (Visitation 1 hour prior)
St. Gabriel's Passionist Parish
670 Sheppard Ave. E, Toronto, ON
- Burial:** Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery



Born: 09/05/1932, Saint John New Brunswick
First Profession: 07/16/52, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania
Ordination: 06/19/1959, Union City New Jersey

"Live simply so that others may simply live."

Fr. Paul Jerome Cusack, CP was born in Saint John New Brunswick on September 5, 1932, son of the late John and Genevieve (Brophy) Cusack. He is survived by his sister Mary Cool and brother-in-law Laurence Donovan, as well as many nieces and nephews. In addition to his parents, Father Paul is predeceased by his brothers John, George, sisters Elizabeth Donovan and Genevieve Cusack, and his brother-in-law Larry Cool and sister-in-laws Sally (Kean) Cusack and Adrienne Cusack.

His early schooling was in Saint John, and, on his 17th birthday, he began Minor Seminary at Holy Cross Seminary in Dunkirk New York. After two years there, he joined the Passionist Novitiate in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, where he professed his first vows. The remainder of his Seminary training took him to several monasteries in Eastern USA and he was ordained a Priest in Union City New Jersey in 1959 by Bishop O'Gara C.P., who had been a prisoner of the Communist regime in China. Fr. Paul's Pastoral Year (then called "Sacred Eloquence") took him to West Springfield, Massachusetts where he learned the fundamentals of preaching, a ministry that would be his hallmark for the rest of his Priestly life.

His first assignment was as Assistant Pastor at St. Gabriel's Passionist Parish in Toronto Ontario, which he thoroughly enjoyed. However, after four years, he was appointed the Superior of a new ministry venture; a Catholic Information and Family Guidance Centre in Sudbury Ontario. When the Canadian branch of the Passionist Province of St. Paul of the Cross became a Vicariate in 1968, he was elected its first Regional Vicar and served for two three-year terms. Following that, a sabbatical year (1974-75) took him to Leuven Belgium for courses in Theology. On his return to Canada, he was once again appointed Pastor of St. Gabriel's. During this time, amid a decline in Passionist membership, he guided the Parish as the only full-time priest, welcoming possibilities of ministry for laypersons, women and men.

His next assignment (1986), was to Holy Cross Retreat Centre in Port Burwell Ontario, which was initiating a focus on Creation-centred Spirituality and the work of Fr. Thomas Berry, C.P., During this time he entered the Doctor of Ministry Programme at St. Michael's College and Toronto School of Theology. His Doctoral Thesis was, appropriately, "Preaching the Passion of the Earth and Perspective Transformation", completed in 1990.

Soon after his Doctorate, Fr. Paul returned to the ministry of Pastor of St. Gabriel's and was once again elected Regional Vicar. One could say that he continued a personal vocation to St. Gabriel's right up until the time of his death; first in the normal sense of the responsibility of Pastor, and then, when he "retired" as "Pastor Emeritus". During those years he oversaw the transformation of St. Gabriel's and the new Parish Church as well as the introduction of Fr. Brando Recana as the official Pastor. His heart has always been with the "good people" (as he liked to say) of the Parish. So very many people have benefitted from his interest in and care of them and their families, that he will be deeply missed. He had another strong interest that occupied his free time: golf. If not especially for his expertise, he will definitely be missed on many golf courses for his good humour and camaraderie.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Passionist Missions.

Passion of the Earth Wisdom of the Cross

[Download it](#)



Passion of the Earth Wisdom of the Cross

Session One
**What Is Happening
to Our Common Home**

A Six-Session Program of Formation and Action
for the Passionist Family
to Engage *Laudato Si'*

Caring for God's Creation
Embracing Gospel Justice
Renewing the Passionist Charism

*"Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity,
but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is
happening to the world into our own personal suffering and
thus to discover what each of us can do about it."*

*– Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (19)*



Keeping Alive the Memory of the Passion in the 21st Century

The Wisdom of the Cross in a Plural World

[Download it](#)



PASSIONIST
INTERNATIONAL
BULLETIN

N°53
54

NEW SERIES
1-2021



B



THE WISDOM OF THE CROSS IN A PLURAL WORLD

It was under this title that the Theological Congress began at the Lateran University last September. The very crucifix with which St. Paul of the Cross preached and inspired the world stood at the front of each of the Congress sessions.