First Profession of Vows Brings Joy and Inspiration to the Congregation

It was a joyous celebration as Matthew Broeren, C.S.Sp., made his First Profession of Vows as a member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit.

Mass was held at the Spiritan Center in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, on July 22, 2019, with Matt's family and friends supporting him as he participated in this important rite in his journey of dedicating himself to living the Gospel as a Spiritan. Following Mass, a celebratory dinner was held so members of the Congregation could welcome and congratulate him.

With his novitiate year of prayer and reflection complete, Matt will move from the Spiritan novitiate in Chicago overseas to Trinidad, where he will join the formation community under the guidance of Formation Director Fr. Gregory McLawrence, C.S.Sp., alongside other professed members in formation from Malawi, Puerto Rico, Uganda, Ghana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Having studied philosophy, healthcare supply chain management and theology at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Matt earned his bachelor's degree in 2018.

While in Trinidad, Matt will continue his theological studies in pursuit of a Master's degree in Divinity at St. John Vianney and Ugandan Martyrs Seminary, including an overseas training program where he will immerse himself in the missionary work of the Spiritans.

At the conclusion of his theological studies, he will be perpetually professed and ordained to the priesthood in preparation for his Mission Appointment, and join the thousands of Spiritans across the world sharing God's word “to the ends of the earth.”
Meet the New Vocation Director: Fr. Honest Munishi, C.S.Sp.

The U.S. Spiritans are pleased to announce the appointment of Fr. Honest Munishi, C.S.Sp., as the Vocations Director.

In his new role, Fr. Honest will lead a dynamic team of both lay and professed Spiritans as we share our charism across the country, speaking with young men and women who may be considering a vocation in the Church.

Born in Moshi, Tanzania, Fr. Honest is the second eldest of eleven children.

He completed his philosophical studies at Nijiro Seminary in Arusha and joined the Novitiate at Lushoto Magamba. He studied theology at Tanzaga University College in Nairobi, Kenya, later earning his Master’s degree in church management. He also completed formation training for pastoral care for refugees, migrants and uprooted people.

Fr. Honest served in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya in the slums of Kibera, and was chaplain at the Tongogara Refugee Camp in Zimbabwe from 2001-2004.

In addition to his mission work, Fr. Honest has pastoral ministry experience at several parishes in Zimbabwe and later in the United States, where he served in Arkansas and Maryland.

“God’s plan is different for everyone. The important part is being open to His call.”

Vows. Our hearts will grow even more full as several Lay Spiritans renew their commitment to the Congregation, and two new members begin their Lay Spiritan formation this fall.

I’m joyful that these individuals, from our founder to our newest professed and lay members and the thousands of Spiritans in between, are open to God’s call and let the Spirit be their guide.

And I’m grateful for your prayers and support for these men and women as they live out the Spiritan mission to proclaim God’s holy word to the ends of the earth.

We welcome Fr. Honest and his experience and enthusiasm as he takes on this important task.

For more information on discerning a vocation with the Spiritans, please contact Fr. Honest at (412) 831-0302, or by email at joinus@spiritans.org.

“The role of a priest has a far-reaching impact on our Christian lives and experiences. I’m humbled and eager to take on the challenging and fulfilling role of Vocation Director within our Congregation, to guide and advise young people as they discern God’s plans for their future.”
Spiritans in Congo
Spared from Ebola

On July 17, 2019, the World Health Organization declared the deadly Ebola outbreak in Congo, now entering its second year, an international health emergency.

As of August 2, 2019, more than 2,700 cases were reported and over 1,800 people have died since the August 2018 outbreak, the second-deadliest Ebola outbreak in history unfolding in a region described as a war zone.

The declaration came days after the virus was confirmed in Goma, a major regional crossroads in northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) on the Rwandan border, with an international airport.

Fr. Crispin Mbumba, C.S.Sp., the Spiritan Provincial in the DRC, reports that “thus far the Ebola outbreak is confined to the eastern regions of North Kivu and Ituri.

There is no Spiritan presence in those areas of the Congo. Some confrères are affected, however, by Ebola through the presence of their families living and working in those areas.”

Spiritans began ministering to the Congo in 1873. Their chosen center was Landana in Cabinda Angola. It was from that base that the evangelization of Congo and interior West Africa began.

Mr. John Gillespie, Director
Fr. Mike Grey, C.S.Sp., Development Officer
Mr. Ray Sylvester, Mission Projects
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< At present, the Spiritans minister in 10 communities throughout the south and east of the DRC. Half of the country’s 70 million inhabitants are considered to be Catholic.
Fr. Joseph Triphon, C.S.Sp., school principal and parish pastor in Kipawa, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, comments on the latest project underway:

“The project (food preparation/kitchen) is under construction and making good progress. We hope, with additional funding, that the construction will be completed this year. Once finished, the new facility will serve the pupils and staff of the Libermann School as well as parishioners and members of the surrounding community. This will solve the problem of not having a proper kitchen and dining for our school and it will be environmentally friendly using gas and electricity instead of charcoal and firewood, which are expensive and also harmful to God’s creation.”

You can help complete this project by making your donation at www.Spiritans.org/donate, and noting “Libermann School Kipawa.”

Learn more about the Libermann School at libermannscholtz.org.

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On July 21, Holy Ghost College at Sankera, Nigeria, celebrated its eighth graduating class with Mass and commencement activities.

Twenty-three boys received their diplomas at the ceremony presided over by Spiritan Fathers Kuha Indyer, Godwin Alkali, Pascal Kamano and Edward Atel.

The invited speaker, Jacob Mtindiga, a former graduate, encouraged the graduates to continue in their journey of education. He delivered a simple message—“the easiest way to enslave yourselves is to refuse education.”

Parents cheered, the school band performed, and several students entertained the attendees with traditional dance and music.

It’s only through the generous gifts of friends like you that SOMA can help fund critical programs like Holy Ghost College.

Without your support, these students might not otherwise have access to the life-changing effects of a good education.

THANK YOU for everything you do.

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Kitchen Takes Shape at the Libermann School in Kipawa

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New Life, New Hope in Asia

On a recent visit to Houston, Fr. Joseph Lam Nguyen, C.S.Sp., commented on the "new life" and "new hope" for the growth of the Church and for Spiritan vocations in Southeast Asia.

"Next year the first priest will be ordained and five will become deacons where they will go on to serve the Church in Vietnam, and in other parts of Asia and the world.

Concurrently work is underway to establish a central location for the Spiritan leadership and those in formation.

Land has been purchased, and architectural drawings have been completed for the building.

Fundraising continues towards eventual construction once local government entities approve moving forward."

Fr. Joseph, who has been in Vietnam for the past three years, was recently appointed local superior for the Spiritans in Vietnam.

For more information on how you can support this project, please contact John Gillespie, Director of SOMA, at 713-522-2882.

Lay Spiritans Grow in Number and Spirit

This October 2, on the Feast Day of our founder Claude Poullart des Places, several Lay Spiritans will make their renewal of commitment at the Spiritan Center in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania.

Debbie Zugates will make a permanent commitment as a Lay Spiritan, and Carol Serafin, Tom Berna, and Janet Berna will renew their commitment.

Two new members, Mercia O’Neil and John Niedenberger, both of Pittsburgh, will begin the Lay Spiritan formation program.

We are blessed to have these women and men carrying out the Spiritan charism of living open to the Spirit, committing to authentic relationships, and walking with those on the margins.

To learn more about the different types of Lay Spiritan associations, visit www.Spiritans.org/lay-spiritans.

Ways to Contribute

Online
Now you can support the work of the U.S. Spiritans when you shop at Amazon! Visit amazonsmile.com and select "Sharelink-Spiritans Worldwide Aid Foundation Inc." as your charity of choice.

You can also visit www.Spiritans.org and click on the “Donate” button. Use the drop down menu to direct your donation to a category of projects, or dedicate your generous gift to a specific project.

Check / Money Order
Please make you check payable to: Congregation of the Holy Spirit, 1700 West Alabama St., Houston, TX 77098. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Questions? Please call 713-522-2882.

THANK YOU!
The Spiritan Life as a Call to Discipleship

By Fr. Lazarus Langbiir, C.S.Sp.

This brief account is a reflection on my vocation as a Spiritan. I made my first vows as a Spiritan on September 8, 2003 at Ejisu, Ghana and was ordained to the Catholic priesthood on July 23, 2011.

Growing up, I had dreams. Dreams of becoming a lawyer, a successful business man, a priest or a doctor. I was inspired by my parents, teachers and some great men and women in my community.

Although I was born into a Catholic family, I did not know the Spiritans until I went to College. My encounter with two Spiritans, Fr. Richard Awange and Fr. Augustine Bayoh, who ministered to the Catholic community at my college, would turn out to be the beginning of my journey to the Spiritan way of life. A life inspired by two great founders, Frs. des Places and Libermann, who sacrificed their comfort and luxury to follow Christ.

I was drawn to the Spiritan way of life by their simple way of life and the dedication they attached to their work. As I look back and appreciate what Frs. Awange and Bayoh did for the Catholic students, I realize more and more how much they sacrificed their own comfort to journey with us in the faith and to help us become responsible adults.

My college was not a Catholic school and these priests did not receive any stipends or any form of financial assistance from us. Yet they were there for us all the time. One day, Fr. Bayoh was on his way to give us a talk when his old car broke down. Instead of canceling the talk in order to attend to his car, he called our leader to go and get him with a campus taxi. He arrived with a smile on his face and gave us one of the most memorable talks on Christian discipleship that I have ever heard.

In moments when I experience difficulties or challenges on this journey, I always draw from the memory of this encounter and I am constantly assured that the Lord God is the leader of this journey.

“Many people mistake our WORK for our vocation. Our VOCATION is the love of Jesus.” – Mother Teresa

FOR THE SPIRITANS, the journey into the future is not a guided tour, but rather an around-the-world adventure.

The Holy Spirit is in charge, and the needs of the people on the side of the road determine the stops we make. We go where the Spirit leads us.

For more information on discerning a vocation with the Spiritans, please contact the Vocation Director, Fr. Honest Munishi, C.S.Sp., at (412) 831-0302 or joinus@spiritans.org.
Claude Poullart des Places

By Fr. Michael Troy, C.S.Sp., RIP

At age 24, Claude Poullart des Places became one of the youngest founders of a major religious congregation when he founded the Spiritans in 1703.

Like so many young people, he struggled with making career decisions that at first were not fully understood or appreciated by his friends, his professors, or even his family.

He was incredibly well-rounded, very popular and greatly admired by his peers. As valedictorian at St. Thomas, the local Jesuit College in Rennes, he gave such a remarkable speech at graduation that he was invited to Versailles as a guest of the Royal Family.

To satisfy his parents’ wishes, he spent three years in Law School and graduated at age 22 with a Licentiate in Law. With the world at his feet and so many promising careers open to him, he had great difficulty deciding between a military career (a family tradition), law and provincial politics (like his father), management and future ownership of the family real estate business (as the only son), or the priesthood.

He decided to concentrate solely on his spiritual preparation. As a seminarian at St. Thomas College and member of the Assembly of Friends, he helped immigrant chimney sweepers from Savoy and poor seminarians at the Jesuit College. The hostel he opened for the latter eventually became the famous Holy Spirit Seminary, and the nursery of a whole new religious foundation – the International Missionary Congregation of the Holy Spirit (the Spiritans).

Claude Poullart des Places, then, was no ready-made hero or miracle-working saint, but an ordinary school boy and young adult, striving by the grace of God and his own best efforts to be and do the best he could and hopefully to be a credit always to his family, high school, college, country and the Catholic Church.

Even in founding the Holy Spirit Seminary he was no old or middle aged rector laying down laws for others, but a young man in his prime – the first to follow the Rules he wrote.

Claude Poullart des Places died peacefully at the young age of 30 on October 2, 1709, after a short but painful illness.

Even in dying, Claude left a memorable lesson to his youthful associates... He made only one request – that his friends bury him not with an expensive tombstone, but in a nameless plot among the poorest of the poor, whom he and they had pledged to serve.

[Edited for clarity and condensed for publication.]

A Prayer for Vocations

O loving and gracious God, Father of all, you bless your people in every time and season and provide for their needs through your providential care.

Your Church is continually in the need of priests, brothers and lay associates to offer themselves in the service of the gospel by lives of dedicated love in the Spiritan family.

Open the hearts of your sons and daughters to listen to your call in their lives. Give them the gift of understanding to discern your invitation to serve you and your Church.

Give them the gift of courage to follow your call. May they have the spirit of young Samuel who found fulfillment in this life when he said to you, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.”

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer.

Amen.
From the September 1959 Paraclete, 15 young men were professed at Ridgefield, including Frs. J. Clifton Hill, Ned Marchessault, Tom Byrne, Bill Headley, and Joseph Gaglione, C.S.Sp. These men of God are celebrating their 60th anniversary of profession this year.

Inside this issue: Read about the newest member of the Congregation to make his first Profession of Vows, and meet our new Vocations Director.

FRIENDS of the Holy Ghost Fathers will rejoice at the news that fifteen young men have been professed as members of the Congregation. In traditional ceremonies at our Novitiate in Ridgefield, Conn., Father Provincial received the new members Aug. 22, the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as they pledged themselves to the observance of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience.


The group has now departed from Ridgefield and will begin their college course this month. A new class of Novices, numbering thirty-five, has replaced them and will follow the Novitiate program for one year under the direction of Rev. Clement F. Lachowsky, C.S.Sp., Master of Novices.

We ask our friends to continue to pray for Vocations to the priesthood. There is a great shortage of priests and much work to be done in the Vineyard of the Lord. By prayers and sacrifices, by encouraging our young men to study for the priesthood, aiding them financially, we can contribute in great measure to the apostolate.