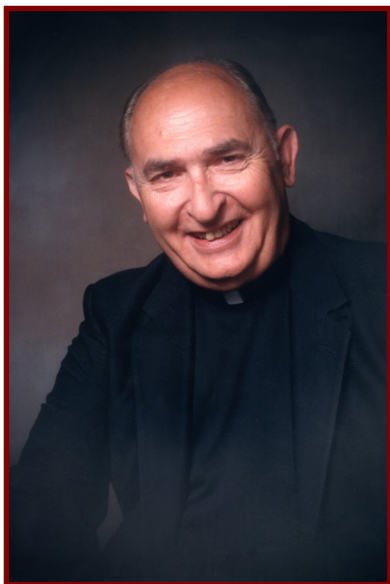




Father Joe

(by Robert Barron)

It was a familiar route. He had driven it many times. He turned left out of the driveway of his home at 438 North LaGrange Road in La Grange Park – aside from dormitories, barracks and rectories, the only home he had ever known – and headed south. No one



*Fr. Joseph M. Shimanek,
1919—2005*

can be quite sure what his thoughts were as he traveled the twenty-one miles to the St. Charles Borromeo Pastoral Center for the Closing of the Women’s 96th Cursillo Weekend. Was he praying as he drove? Did he forget about the invitation to dinner before the closing?

Meanwhile at the Lockport residence of Deacon Rob and Judy Weierman (Men’s 34th, Women’s 25th), a group of Cursillistas had assembled to enjoy dinner with their former Spiritual Director before making the short trip across the river to the Pastoral Center to take part in that evening’s Closing.

There would be plenty of time as Closings generally started late in those days. However, concern began to build as the evening wore on and the honored guest did not arrive. This was not like him as he had a reputation for punctuality. He never did arrive at the Weierman’s.

At the Closing, Rectora Marta Spiezio (Women’s 58th) wondered to herself who she would call upon during that part of the Closing when the Diocesan Spiritual Director addresses the new Cursillistas and the Fourth Day community. Father Mark Jendrysik (Men’s 87th), then Spiritual Director

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From the Lay Director

We are being called to “spread the Kingdom of God” by bringing about the Christian transformation of society such that the Mind of Christ penetrates society and that His teachings and His law renew society and fill it entirely as Pius XII said. We do this using the Cursillo method reaching out to one person at a time.

But why would we do this? Why would we want to bring our friends to Christ? Answer: To save souls and lead others to heaven.

How important is that? Well if others don't get to heaven then they end up in eternal damnation. That's a very serious matter. Does this give you a fresh perspective on your discipleship in Christ?

De Colores!

Tim Moore

Lay Director—Joliet Cursillo

ROAD TRIP! 24th National Cursillo Encounter

(By Barb Linek)

In July, Juan Francisco Villalobos and I had the good fortune to attend the 24th National Cursillo Encounter at Chapman University in Orange County, California. This was my second National Encounter and Juan's first—and surely not our last! We traveled



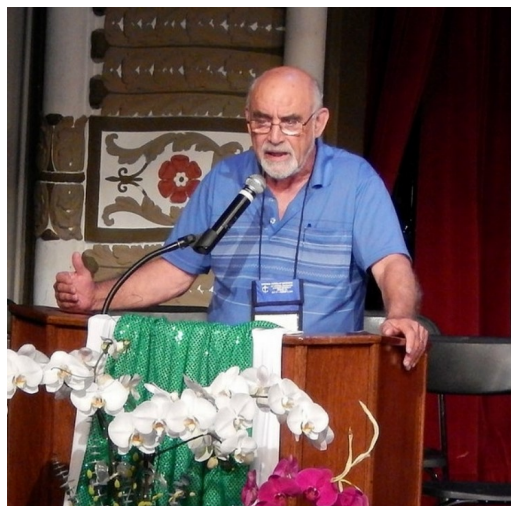
Our team at the 24th National Encounter. (L-R) Juan, Yesmenia, Barb and Cirilo

with our Region V Spanish Coordinator, Lilia Del Real, and the Lay Director of the Peoria Diocese's Spanish Movement, Cirilo Lachino.

Lilia had to attend the National Secretariat meeting before the Encounter. Therefore we arrived in Orange one day early and enjoyed our time visiting some of the local tourist attractions, such as Mission San Juan Capistrano.

The National Encounter was attended by 680 Cursillistas from dioceses all over the United States and the world with many language groups represented, including English, Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

The most notable of the international participants



Miguel Serada, friend of Eduardo Bonin, speaks about the history of Cursillo

was a friend and “groupie” of Eduardo Bonin, the founder of our movement, by the name of Miguel Sureda. Miguel gave a wonderful talk entitled ***The History of Cursillo*** and also shared his understanding of Eduardo's vision with us one on one. Juan and Cirilo were lucky enough to hear him speak at the local School of Leaders the night we arrived.

Other Rollos included, Evangelization Through Friendship, Christian Leaders, Growing in Holiness through the Cursillo, Stewardship in the Cursillo and The Joy of the Gospel.

We'd like to invite you to the 25th National Encounter! It will be held at Villanova University in Philadelphia on July 23-26, 2015. I promise you will learn a great deal about our beloved movement but more importantly, you will be inspired by the fascinating Cursillistas you meet from all over the USA and the world.

Barb Linek (Women's 72nd) is a member of St. Dominic's Parish in Bolingbrook and currently serves as Lay Director for the Spanish Movement of the Joliet Cursillo.

The Prescription is Pasta

(By Tom Mayer)

I first met Fr. Alfred Tumwesigye at the 124th Men's Cursillo weekend. He was a candidate and I was working my first weekend in the Palanca chapel. At that



Over 200 attend pasta dinner fund raiser at St. Petronille's for Friends of Shalom.

time in 2012, Father was completing a Master's degree at DePaul University in Chicago and planned to return to Uganda in August of that year. After our friendship grew so did my call to help Father Alfred's mission to build a medical center in his home village of Nyakyera and to service the surrounding Ntungamo District in Uganda – East Africa. After the medical center is completed, this remote and rural area of Uganda would provide medical care for about 30,000 people.

In August 2013, Father returned to the US with a specific need to raise funds for the roof of the medical center. After understanding and defining Father's mission, Friends of Shalom for Uganda was formed as the US entity to support Father's plan. In January of 2014 our group was incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois and this August the IRS recognized us as a 501(c)(3) public charity.

On August 22nd our first fundraiser was held at St. Petronille in Glen Ellyn where over 200 people joined us for a delicious spaghetti dinner and fellowship. Father Alfred presented to the attendees the work he is doing in his village to provide health, spiritual, psychological, and hospice care to the local people.

After the event, with the generous support of parishioners from St. Francis of Rome parish in Chicago where Father lived and served while in Chicago, and the generosity of many other family and friends from

the Joliet Cursillo Community, Father Alfred was able to execute his mission.

The money was used at the medical center to make a payment on the land and to pay for a new septic system, shutters for the doors, electrical and plumbing work that will allow the medical center to start seeing patients this November.

A portion of the donations was used in a special way to support a local 20-year-old first year midwife student by the name Ninsiima Christine. She had made a request of our board to pay for her school fees so she could "... achieve my desired goal and dream of becoming a midwife who will readily assist pregnant mothers to have safe deliveries, to promote life and generally to offer my dedicated service to God's people professionally."

Upon completion of her midwife degree Ninsiima will work at the medical center bringing her skills to the care and comfort of those in need.

To be a part of this work and to be called to help raise funds that care for the poor and needy half way around the world is a truly awesome experience. To provide an education to change a life that will help bring life to countless others is the work of the hand of God.

If anyone wishes to help support Father Alfred's work, I invite you to become a "Friend" of his and send a donation to:

Friends of Shalom for Uganda
65 N. Ott Ave.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

<http://www.friendsofshalomforuganda.com/>

Tom Mayer (Men's 122nd) is a member of St. Petronille's parish in Glen Ellyn and serves as School of Leaders chair for the Joliet Cursillo.



Fr. Alfred addresses the attendees.

Into Africa

(By Lee Wirth)



Lee Wirth makes a friend and convert for the Lord in Kisii, Kenya

I want to share with you the work of the Lord done through us in Kenya. I first want to thank you for your prayers. Without the prayers of the saints, the work of the harvest of souls for the Kingdom would never be accomplished.

The team from the US of Rob, Dave, James, Ed and I worked with Augustine, William, Ken, and Samuel, our Africa team, to minister in the name of Jesus Christ. We visited a city in Kenya named Kisii which has a population of about 200,000 but the surrounding county of which it is the seat has a population of over a million.

Kisii is set in a mountainous region at an elevation of about fifty-five hundred feet. Kisii was established during World War I by British soldiers who were forced to retreat from Lake Victoria by advancing German forces. It is a very beautiful area with many bananas groves, sugar cane, potato, and tea fields.

There was lots of preparatory work done before we arrived in Kisii. Rob, Dave, and Leon had been to Kisii to plan for the outreach many months in advance. They organized the many pastors in the area to come together to work for this outreach. It was good to see

that many pastors of different churches were working together to bring the Gospel to the Kisii area.

My part in serving the Lord in this outreach for the first three days was on the mobile team that traveled around Kisii on a flatbed truck, singing, preaching, dancing, and announcing the festival. We had two DJs, a well-known celebrity couple who did the singing and dancing and two wonderful male dancers. I'm not very good at singing, but I did some dancing and lots of preaching.

We were able to see much of the area of Kisii and this was an excellent way to reach many people for the Lord. Large crowds came around our truck to see the performers, sing and dance. The African people love their music and they love to dance! James and I preached the Gospel to them from the flatbed truck. Many



Kisii is located in southwestern Kenya, to the east of Lake Victoria.

(Continued on page 5.)

Into Africa (Continued from page 4.)

people came to the Lord by this method. God saved many of His people through the "Road Show." During the noon hour, many of the school kids were outside for lunch and we were able to talk to them. More than 90% of the school children do not wear shoes, but all of them wear uniforms. I loved talking to the kids about Jesus. I'm so blessed by the Lord to be able to do this work. Pastor William would pray over the people who were sick. Many people were healed by the Lord. God gave one man back his eyesight. I was able to see the power of our Almighty God heal His people.

The next two days, I ministered to those in prison. We went to the Kisii Prison with Ken and William. We first ministered to 150 women and their children. The children are allowed to live with their mothers as they serve their time. It was so inspiring to hear them all singing and praising the Lord as we came into the hall. Ken delivered a very powerful message to them. Most all of them gave their lives to the Lord.

We then went to minister to the more than one thousand men. There were three large buildings holding these men. Ken, William, and I each took a building. There were over 300 men sitting on mats along both sides of the building where they slept. Each had a small back pack hanging from the open window to hold their personal things. I preached a very powerful message, according to Emanuel, who was my translator. Many of these men came to Christ.

The next day we headed north of Kisii about one and a half hours away in two cars. We visited two different prisons. Our team was Dave, William, and Felix. It was a nice sunny warm day. A men's choir was singing when we arrived. We were able to share a

good message with about sixty men while sitting outside with them. We also ministered to about fifteen to twenty women. It was a good morning and Dave and I teamed together to give the message using a translator. I hope and pray that these prisoners' lives will be transformed by Jesus through our ministry. One rainy day William and I went up to the town area of Kisii where all the shops are located. Since it was raining, people were standing under over hangs along the store fronts. It was easy to talk to them when

they were just standing around. Being an American wearing my red Jesus hat, I drew a crowd of people. William translated for me and I told them why God had sent me to Africa. I witnessed to them how God has changed my life and that God can do that for them. I shared with them how Jesus was sent here for us to forgive us our sins. God gave

me a powerful message and many of them received the Lord. William had to watch out for the street kids who were trying to steal from my back pack. Over thirty people came to the Lord on the streets. We prayed for their families and their businesses. People here are very open to the Lord.

Through the festivals, radio preaching, the road show, mini-festivals, and prison ministry more than 16,000 people came to Christ. It was a wonderful work of the Lord using each of us with the gifts He has given us to glorify His name.

God bless and again thanks for your prayer support!

Your brother in the Lord, Lee Wirth

Lee Wirth (Men's 74th) is a member of Our Lady of Peace Parish in Darien.



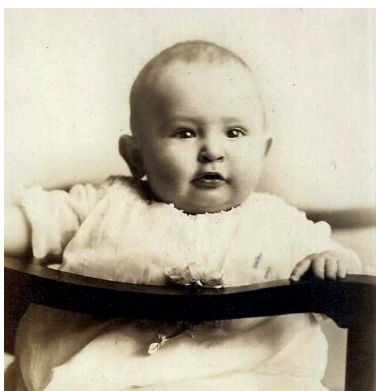
"Suffer the children to come unto me..." Mt. 19:14. The school children await Lee's message of hope from the Gospel.

Father Joe (Continued from page 1.)

had not been able to commit to being in attendance that evening. At the front of the assembly Marta asked hopefully if Fr. Joseph Shimanek was in attendance without knowing whether, in fact, he was there. As was his custom, he was seated in the last row of the chapel at the Pastoral Center. He arose to answer Marta's call and proceeded to the front of the assembly.

"What stood out was him walking all the way up the aisle to a roaring standing ovation," recalled Marta. "I will never forget the smile on his face. He was a very humble man. We loved him so much." The next day November 14, 2005, at the age of 86, Father Joseph Shimanek passed into eternal life.

Voted Most Likely to ...



Joseph Shimanek at 6 months

Joseph Michael Shimanek was born on May 24, 1919 to John J. and Rose M. (nee Skoda) Shimanek. The family lived in La-Grange Park, IL and Joseph was baptized June 16, 1919

at his home parish of St. Francis Xavier. John was a Chicago native and like his wife Rose, was of Bohemian heritage. Rose was born in Prague in 1883 and immigrated to the United States in her birth year. John, three years her senior worked as a postman. Joseph was, in effect, an only child having an older brother who died in infancy before he was born.

Joseph attended St. Francis Xavier grade school in La Grange Park. The school in those days was located in a simple red-brick structure with four classrooms at the corner of Ogden and North Waiola Avenue.

Joseph later attended Fenwick High School in Oak Park, a distance of 8 miles from his home. The length of that commute required use of public transportation in the form of the electric street-car system operated by the Chicago & West Town line.



Fenwick HS, Class of 1937

"In my Fenwick days, there was a small group from La Grange and nearby towns, and we would take the *Toonerville Trolley* – an open street-car with straw seats and a coal-burning stove in the middle of the car. We would get off at Oak Park Avenue and walk to school," recol-

lected Fr. Shimanek in a 2004 interview for the Fenwick High School 75th Anniversary Book. The name *Toonerville Trolley* was a nickname the students dubbed the street-car inspired by a popular newspaper comic series of the times.

He was an active student at Fenwick participating in band all four years as well as dance organizing, the debating club, dramatics, public speaking, the St. Thomas Confraternity (a service organization of students which raised funds for missions and Christmas donations to the needy), the *Blackfriars* yearbook and the school newspaper, *The Wick*. He even tried his hand at boxing sophomore year!

He further recalled, "In four years at Fenwick, I never missed a school dance. Fenwick had the best dances of any school in the western suburbs." Joseph Shimanek graduated from Fenwick High School in 1937.

He enrolled the following fall at the University of Dayton in Ohio where he pursued a degree in electrical engineering and graduated in the spring of 1941. His leadership and engagement is even more evident during these years. He was involved in the university radio station WING, he was editor of the yearbook his junior year, served as his senior class treasurer, student council treasurer, president of the campus activity board of service as well as being involved at various points on the drill team, intramural tennis, glee club and again on numerous dance organizing committees.

(Continued on page 7.)

Father Joe (Continued from page 6.)



At UD radio station WING, director Shimanek (at left) gives the cues to the on-air cast.

He was also a member of the Upsilon Delta Sigma Debating Society team all four years. On one occasion, he and a fellow student were undefeated during a two-week east coast trip debating other university teams.

Semper Fi



Lt. Shimanek visits home in February 1944.

On August 9, 1943, Joseph Shimanek enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. A month later, Private First Class Shimanek was a member of Company K in the Officer's Candidate School (OCS) at the Marine Corps Quantico, VA training base just down the Potomac from Washington, DC. By the following January, he had graduated from OCS and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant.

As the United States entered World War II, the Navy

and Marine Corps were desperately short of men qualified in the nascent technology of Radar. Consequently in July 1944, given his electrical engineering background, he was re-assigned to the Boston Navy Yards. Here he attended classes at nearby Harvard University and then the Radar School for Navy Officers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) through the balance of 1944.

After further training for the Pacific theater of operations at the Marine Corps Air Station in Cherry Point, NC, he was promoted to First Lieutenant and transferred to San Francisco in July 1945. Shortly thereafter, he was ordered to the Todd-Pacific shipyards in Tacoma, WA to serve on the pre-commissioning detail for the under-construction escort carrier USS Point Cruz (CVE-119). The ship was commissioned in October and assigned to conduct pilot qualification operations off the west coast in the following months.

He was again re-assigned to a sister ship, the USS Sicily (CVE-118) as Radar/Radio officer in January



The USS Rendova, a Commencement Bay class escort carrier, typical of the three he served on.

1946. In April he was moved again to another sister vessel, the USS Rendova (CVE-114). That ship's air wing at the time consisted of Marine Fighter Squadron VMA-214, better known as "The Black Sheep" squadron.

Father Joe rarely discussed his time in the service.

(Continued on page 8.)

Father Joe (Continued from page 7.)

If pressed he would generally say one of two things. Emily Forsythe (Women's 4th), a close friend and long-time parishioner of St. Joseph's parish in Manhattan, recalled that Father Joe said his mother related that it was very hard for her to picture him as one of those "Roughnecks." Consequently, Father Joe always said he was in the "Roughnecks." Deacon Rob Weierman recalled that Father Joe's usual response to his time in the military was, "Once a Marine, always a Marine!"

One anecdote does survive. Barb Frazee (Women's 53rd) related that Father Joe attributed his later skin cancer on his scalp to his days as a Marine. During one sunny afternoon of R&R, he took a raft out onto a pond and fell asleep. Consequently, he became quite sunburned on his unprotected scalp. The next day he was back in training and never complained as he was afraid to report to sick-bay for fear of facing court-martial for damaging his "GI-Issue" scalp. This would seem to be an incident which occurred during his time in OCS, explaining his reticence at reporting his sun-burn and worry that it would disqualify him from the program. He also made certain he was never sunburned again. Barb recalls that when he would tell the story he would laugh and say, "I was GI-Issue you know."

Beautiful Shepherd

After his service in the Marine Corps, Joseph Shimanek worked as an electrical engineer for several years in the Western Electric division of AT&T, most likely at the famous Hawthorne Works in Cicero, IL. He wasn't long for that vocation as he later remarked, "something came over me, I wrestled with the Lord, and he won."

Joseph Shimanek began his vocational training in the late 1940s at St. Thomas Seminary in Denver, CO. (Today it is known as St. John Vianney Theological Seminary). He never completed his seminary studies at St. Thomas. His mother passed away before his ordination while he was away at seminary. His father took ill when he was one year away from ordination. He asked Bishop McNamara, then head of the Diocese of Joliet, if he could complete his seminary work closer to home to be near his father. The Bishop granted approval and Father Joe then transferred to St. Procopius in Lisle for his final year of seminary including his ordination to the transitional diaconate.

(In the early 1960s, Father Joe returned to the Abbey as an instructor at the Abbey's seminary which closed in 1968.)

Years later on the eve of Deacon Rob's ordination in 1997, Father Joe recalled that during his diaconate ordination at the Cathedral, he came out with his stole on backwards (right shoulder to left hip instead of left shoulder to right hip). Father Joe believed that was why the Bishop first assigned him to the Cathedral so that he could keep a close eye on him. Father Joe's advice to Deacon Rob was, "Rob, make sure you get it right!"

On May 1, 1954, Father Joseph M. Shimanek was one of twelve priests to be ordained by Bishop McNamara to the Joliet Diocese. His father, John J. Shimanek,



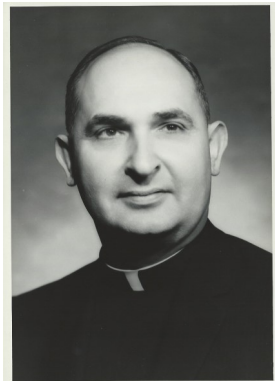
*Diocese of Joliet ordination class of May 1, 1954.
Fr. Joe is standing to the right on the end.*

was in attendance that day. Fr. John Sullivan (Men's 9th) also ordained that day, was assigned to be an associate pastor along with Father Joe to the St. Raymond's Cathedral staff. They served together under the Right Reverend Monsignor Edwin Hoover for four years until Fr. John's transfer to Assumption Parish in Coal City, IL. They were both undoubtedly present for the first Mass celebrated by Bishop McNamara at the current Cathedral structure on December 8, 1954, and its dedication the following May.

In 1959, Father Joe was made associate at Sacred Heart parish in Joliet. This was followed by a residency at Holy Cross parish, also in Joliet. His first assignment as pastor came in 1964 at St. Joseph Parish in Manhattan. (Continued on page 9.)

Father Joe (Continued from page 8.)

Emily Forsythe recalls what it was like when he arrived at St. Joseph's: "Father talked a lot about God's



Father Joe in 1964.

love. Our parish was very traditional when he arrived. He wanted everybody involved. He rattled a lot of cages which was good - the cages needed rattling."

Father Joe brought Curillo to St. Joseph's parish. He encouraged Emily and her husband Franklin (Men's 11th) to make a Weekend. Emily continued, "He learned that parishioners who

made a Weekend would be the ones that became involved. That was when enlightenment came. We became a very active and outgoing parish."

One day Emily, who is a convert to the faith, received a letter from the local Presbyterian Minister asking her to return to the faith of her birth. She shared the contents with Father Joe and he observed, "They won't have you back. We've ruined you!"

Emily continued: "Once in a while he would call and say, 'Emily, I have some unexpected guests, do you have anything I can feed them?'" She would tell him, "Father Joe, you remind me of my boys. They are always bringing home friends, stray dogs or frogs."

Father Shimanek also served as the Joliet Diocese Executive Director of Catholic Charities from 1960 to 1976, Diocesan Director of Resettlement from 1969 to 1976 and Director of the Society of St. Vincent De-Paul. In these capacities he occasionally had to travel to locations where their funds were being employed. One such trip took him to Africa. Emily recalls that he called them from Africa to check up on how things were going at St. Joseph's in his absence. He was ever the diligent shepherd!

"When the Bishop had a priest who needed some tender loving care he would call Father Joe and Father would never say 'no'", she added.

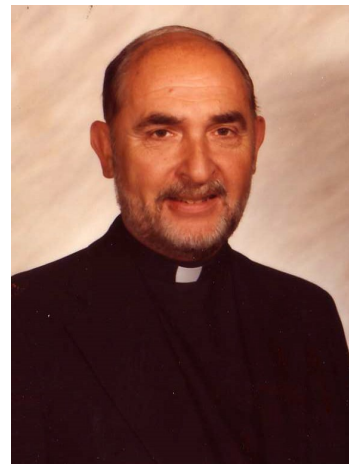
Father Joe's term at St. Joseph continued into 1973. He was then assigned to St. Anthony parish in Joliet,

first as a resident and then later as administrator.

In 1976 he was assigned as pastor at St. Pius X parish in Lombard. Dick Kohl (Men's 59th) recalls when he arrived: "I still remember his very first Mass and homily.

He said, 'Look, I love you.

That's a decision, and I have made that decision and I do love you.' Right away there was something about him. He was a beautiful shepherd, a shepherd to his flock."



Father Joe in the late 1970's, with a beard!

Barb and Bob Frazee (Men's 69th) moved to Lombard in 1979. Barb recalls that she was very disenchanted as a Catholic in those days. She recalls seeing Father Joe on the altar for the first time and thinking, "This is what a priest should be. This is the way church should be - I'm home."

Barb remembers: "He was always available. I walked in to his office on a Saturday evening after 5pm Mass and I was so upset about something. I know he was on his way somewhere because he excused himself into the other room and I heard him on the phone. He cancelled an appointment he had and he came back and sat down and he just listened - for hours. That was him, he was always available."

Bob Frazee served on the St. Pius X Parish council with Father Joe and recalls: "He never said anything about 'you need to do this or do that'. His direction always involved the spiritual side. He could let go and let the parishioners go forward. He guided all the way.

"A lot of time you would go to an event and he would be outside in his car, praying his breviary (Liturgy of the Hours) before coming in." (Cont. on page 10.)

Father Joe (Continued from page 9.)

There were moments of levity as well. Jim Higdon and his brother Steve, (brothers-in-law to the author) attended grade school at St. Pius X and served as altar boys in the late 1970s.

Jim related: “One Monday, my brother Steve and I were serving at the 6:30 a.m. Mass before school started. I was in 6th grade and Steve was in 8th grade. We were in the sacristy at the front of the church behind the altar getting ready and goofing around as we always did and in walks Father Shimanek, very stone-faced and very quiet. You didn’t want to get out-of-line with Father Shimanek.

“There was a bell that hung from a ribbon inside the sacristy that one of the altar boys would tug on to give notice to the congregation that the priest and the altar boys were about to walk in and that Mass was about to begin. So after another little bout of

“Fr. Shimanek served the Mass for the next forty minutes or so with two altar boys that were giggling uncontrollably. When we finished, he never brought it up or scolded us. He was a great guy and we were very blessed to have him as our pastor.”

Along the way, Father Joe managed to return to his studies and earn his Doctorate of Ministry in 1989. The focus of his work was on the role of the diaconate in the church.

A Method That Sustains

Father Shimanek was a candidate at the first Joliet Cursillo Men’s Weekend at St. Isaac Jogues parish in August 1963. He was one of seven priests to attend the Weekend which was put on by a team from the Chicago Diocese. Another priest candidate that



The Men’s 78th Weekend, March 1990. One of thirty-nine that Father Joe served on as Spiritual Director. He is pictured to the right in the De Colores t-shirt.

giggling, we’re ready to start and Steve pulled on the bell-ribbon with a little bit too much zest, ripping the ribbon and knocking the bell to the floor with a big crash. Without batting an eyelash Father said, ‘Boys just walk out.’

Weekend was Fr. John Jerbi, who for a short time was Spiritual Director for the Diocese. He was succeeded by Fr. John George and then in turn by Father Joe in 1967. (Continued on page 11.)

Father Joe (Continued from page 10.)

Father Joe served as Spiritual Director for the following 34 years and then continued to serve as Director Emeritus. During his term as Spiritual Director, the movement grew and thousands of men and women made Cursillo Weekends at numerous locations across the diocese.

From 1963 to his passing, Father Joe worked on or participated in eighty-three Men's and Women's Cursillo Weekends combined. He delivered seventy-three clergy *rollos* including eighteen Sacraments *rollos* and twenty-seven Life in Grace *rollos* as well as all the other *rollos* and meditations. He was the Weekend Spiritual Director or Co-Spiritual Director thirty-nine times and Assistant Spiritual Director eight times.

What was the attraction that Cursillo had for Father Joe? Deacon Rob related that he would say, "I am involved in this movement because it has a method that sustains."



Deacon Rob Weierman with Father Joe at St. Walter's in 2001

Father Joe was especially known for his Sacraments *Rollo* and the enthusiasm he brought to the topic on which he was able to hold forth for a considerable period of time. Fr. John Sullivan recalls, "He was famous for his Sacraments talk. He would go on and on

and on. This would delay the Candidates getting their lunch."

Deacon Rob stated, "Father Joe holds the record for the longest talk in Cursillo history. It was on the seven Sacraments. Three and a half hours later he had only covered six. Thank God there was no Cursillo *rollo* on the Ten Commandments!"

No one has a tally for how many Secretariat meetings Father Joe attended in his years as Spiritual Director for the Movement. "He never gave his opinion until everyone else spoke," remembered Deacon Rob. "If tensions rose, he would always interrupt and say, 'We are not here to win arguments, but to find solutions.'"

Marta, a member of Secretariat during Father Joe's tenure observed that, "Nothing ever really ruffled his feathers. When someone would remark 'that we always did it that way' or 'we used to do it this way', he would say, 'Cursillo is a movement of the Spirit. It's like a pendulum, it goes back and forth. Pretty soon the pendulum goes the other way.' When he would say things like that, people would say he's right. He presided over Secretariat as a man of the Spirit."

Although he would let the laity of Secretariat drive the meeting agenda, Deacon Rob asked Father one time, "Would you step in if there really is a heresy being presented? He replied, 'Are you going to present one?' He had a quick wit. You could not one-up him."

Deacon Rob served as the last President of the Joliet Cursillo and as the first Lay Director. When the movement turned twenty-years of age, Father Joe advocated changing the title to Lay Director as that was more in-line with Cursillo conventions.

"Father Joe proposed three candidates to the Bishop for the position of Lay Director and I was floored when I found out at a closing that I was the one chosen," related Deacon Rob. "The closing was running twenty minutes late and he had this way of wagging his finger at you. 'What are you doing about it?'"

(Continued on page 12.)

Father Joe (Continued from page 11.)

One year Father Joe and Deacon Rob (then Lay Director) attended the National Encounter in Minnesota. Father Joe gave a memorable talk. Deacon Rob recalls that he said, "We are feeding on ourselves by just encouraging Catholics. The Movement has to go out to the world, to change the world. We are not supposed to be an 'in-house' movement, we are supposed to be an 'out-house' movement!"

Weekend closings were a very familiar venue for Father Joe. It was a chance for him to address the new Cursillistas. Again Deacon Rob recalled, "He was always looking to encourage folks to be leaders for the movement. At closings he would say, 'we need at least two of you to make Cursillo your ministry to pass this on.'"

Sitting at closings with the new Cursillistas as a table leader, Marta was struck by the impact Father Joe's remarks would have on them. Marta recalled, "Invariably, he would encourage them with his famous quote he used at all closings, 'No matter where you're at right now, don't think you need to feel a certain way because the next person is flying high or their witness was more meaningful than yours. God does not look at any of that. You are exactly where you are supposed to be.' The way he gave that message, you believed it. I could almost hear a sigh of relief from them."

Many recalled that when Father Joe would finish the distribution of the host during a Cursillo Mass and as he was purifying the vessels, he would sing a hymn based on John 4:16, "God is love and he who abides in love, abides in God".

His final Weekend as a team-member was the Men's 109th in October of 2005, only a month before he passed. He gave the Weekend's last Clergy *rollo*, "Life in Grace".

Have Chalice, Will Travel

For his 25th anniversary as a priest, a number of his friends gifted Father Joe with a portable Mass kit. Deacon Rob recalled, "it was an attaché case with felt cradling a chalice and sacramentary – really everything you needed for Mass. He would say, 'you want to have a Mass somewhere? I've got my kit!'" As an added embellishment, Franklin Forsythe even had business cards made for Father Joe which stated,

'Have Chalice Will Travel'.



Father Joe delivers the Homily in 1994.

throughout the diocese. These included St. Rose in Wilmington, St. Joseph in Rockdale, St. Peter in Clifton, Mary Queen of Heaven in Elmhurst, Holy Family in Joliet, Sacred Heart in Lombard and also back at his old parish, St. Joseph in Manhattan.

"He re-converted me as well as inspiring my children", recalled St. Joseph's of Manhattan parishioner Laura McGuire (Women's 118th). "The kids called him *Father It's a Miracle!* because during every children's Mass he would exclaim during the consecration, 'It's a miracle! Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity! That is what you are receiving from our Lord Jesus Christ!'"

On another occasion, Patti Murphy (Women's 60th) took her children to 5pm Mass at St. Jude's in Joliet. She remembered, "We were waiting and waiting and no one arrived to preside. Someone had called someone and so finally about fifteen minutes after Mass was to start, Father Joe comes running in saying, 'Don't worry, I'm a Marine! I can handle any situation!'"

When Father Joe initially retired, he told Bishop Imesch that he would give him eight months of the

In 1989, Father Joe retired from his position as pastor of St. Pius X parish. He was honored with the title Pastor Emeritus. He re-located to his home in LaGrange and continued to serve the diocese as a very active substitute and even took assignments as administrator for a number of parishes

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Father Joe (Continued from page 12.)

year. The other four months he used to visit his many cousins and friends around the country.

Deacon Rob recalls: "Bishop Imesch related a call he received from Father Joe about ten years after his retirement. 'Bishop Imesch, I am so sorry, I just can't do four Masses on a Sunday anymore.' The Bishop replied, 'Joe, I've got priests half your age telling me they can't do three!'"

When Deacon Rob was in the process of discerning for the diaconate, he approached Father Joe for advice. Did he think that Rob would make a good deacon? As was his custom, Father Joe generally turned the question back on the questioner as in the following exchange, "Rob, you can discern this. You have to pray to the Holy Spirit for wisdom and understanding. Rob you have the answer."

Deacon Ron admitted, "I was really looking for a 'yes' or 'no'."

Father Joe was also Spiritual Director to Deacon Rob's late wife Judy. Deacon Rob remembers playing Martha to his Judy's Mary, clearing the dinner plates while she received direction from Father.

Father Joe's frugality was well understood by those closest to him. After his retirement, he re-located back to the house at 438 North LaGrange Road. During one visit to his residence, Emily remarked to him that he could use new curtains. He immediately responded, "Will you go get them with me?" The reaction was similar when she told him he needed a new mattress. He admitted that it was kind of lumpy.

Emily and Franklin also had to convince him to obtain some new furniture to replace items such as a leather chair which had been used many years earlier by Bishop McNamara and was found by him discarded on the porch of the Catholic Charities office.

Deacon Rob admired Father Joe's gifts at being his own travel-agent in organizing trips to see his many cousins (sixty-plus by Emily's count!) at the lowest possible cost. He would often employ multiple modes of transportation as well as go out of his way to keep the costs down. He also eschewed the use of toll roads. Deacon Rob recalls him stating his philosophy as being, "why use a toll road when there is a

free road right next to it?"

Father Joe had heart problems which manifested itself in the late 1980s when he required triple by-pass surgery. Years later Emily observed to him, "Father, you've gotten your money's worth from that surgery!" He replied, "I'll just keep it for a lifetime, ha!"

His frugality however did not apply to his willingness to help others. "He was only frugal for himself. He



Father Joe on the back steps of his LaGrange Park home on his 75th birthday in 1994.

took care of a lot of people who needed his help and his aide - people who needed it to live on," confided Emily.

His generosity extended beyond his lifetime. In his will, he left amounts to all the Parishes in which he had served as well as to Catholic Charities, the University of Dayton, the St. John Vianney Seminary in Denver, the Joliet Cursillo and his home to the Joliet Diocese.

He had an infectious laugh that could always be heard above the crowd. At that last Closing, Dick Kohl recalls that he was announced as the new Lay Director. Dick remembers hearing Father Joe's laugh above all else. On another occasion, Barb recounted

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Father Joe (Continued from page 13)

that Father Joe was presiding at graveside for a female friend who was not partial to men. When Father Joe noticed all the pall-bearers were women as well as the bag-piper enlisted to play, the irony got the best of him and once again his signature laugh could be heard.

“He was like the brother I never had and I was like the sister he never had”, remarked Emily. “Franklin and I feel that our spiritual life was encouraged and made better because of him.”

Father’s career was well celebrated during his life. Grateful parishioners and Cursillistas organized Masses and celebrations for his many milestones: His 25th Jubilee as a priest in 1979, 35th Jubilee as a priest as



Father Joe cuts the cake at his 40th Jubilee Celebration.

well as his 70th birthday and retirement in 1989, 30 years of service to the Joliet Cursillo in 1996, 40th Jubilee as a priest in 1994, 45th Jubilee as a priest in 1999, 50th Jubilee as a priest in 2004 and his transition from Spiritual Director to Director Emeritus of the Cursillo movement in 2001 at St. Walter’s Parish in Roselle. Very often these Masses would close with his favorite hymn, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

There are so many wonderful stories about Father Joe’s dedication to his parishioners and the Fourth

Day Community as well as his fellow man. One story would encapsulate his dedication.

Barb Frazee had a co-worker friend named Pat who mentored her as a nurse. Pat was a lapsed Catholic and was very angry. She had been abused when she was young and she did not like men very much, especially priests. Pat learned she had brain cancer.

Barb received a call from Pat once in the middle of the night. Barb had always told her to call any time as she knew the darkest time is often in the middle of the night.

“I am on oxygen. I am getting near the end. I am getting real scared,” Pat admitted over the phone.

“OK, you need to get right with God again,” counseled Barb. “If you make it, that’s the miracle I am praying for, but if you don’t, I want to see you again in Heaven.”

“That’s why I am calling. Do you know anybody?” Pat replied.

“I know someone. I know somebody you’ll love,” Barb assured her.

Father Joe was retired and living in LaGrange Park and Barb called him. The first time they went to see Pat together, Barb waited in the driveway and Father Joe went in because Barb knew there would be reconciliation.

“Oh my gosh Barb, where did you find this man I love him!” exclaimed Pat later to Barb.

Barb and Father Joe would go regularly and take communion to Pat every Saturday morning. Barb always drove and filled in Father Joe about Pat’s background.

Barb was at the hospital one night on the late shift and received a call from one of Pat’s daughters who said she thought that night would be Pat’s last. Barb called Father Joe at 10:30 p.m. when she got off work and he met her at St. Pius X around 11:30 p.m.

By the time they arrived at Pat’s, all the family was assembled and Pat was in a coma. Father Joe stood by Pat and laid his hands on her head.

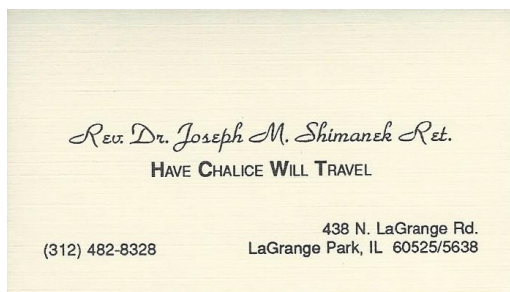
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Father Joe (Continued from page 14.)

“The last thing to go is hearing,” related Father Joe to the family. “I want all of you to walk up to her and tell her how much you love her and what she meant to you.”

Pat died that night.

“She wouldn’t have done anything but she’s in Heaven today because of him. He told her she’s going to Heaven. He said [to her] as soon as you close your eyes you’re going to heaven,” finished Barb.



Father Joe’s Calling Card

The day after the closing of the Women’s 96th, Father Joe was back at St. Joseph’s parish in Manhattan helping out for a vacationing Fr. McGeean. He stayed with Emily and Franklin at their homes in Manhattan and then New Lenox as was often his custom when he was assisting at St. Joseph’s or visiting friends in the southern part of the Diocese.

As they retired that Sunday evening, Emily told Father Joe he should sleep-in the next morning. Father demurred saying he wanted to go to the rectory to make breakfast for Fr. Daniel Hoehn, a newly ordained priest who grew up in Manhattan and routinely returned on Mondays (his day off) to celebrate daily Mass.

That Monday morning, Emily made her way to the parish and was performing her duties as sacristan making things ready for Mass. She was startled by the sudden appearance of her son Dan Forsythe who was a paramedic for the Manhattan Fire Department. Dan stated they had received a 911 call from the rectory and believed it was Father Joe – did Emily have the key? Not having the key to the rectory with her, Emily told Dan to break down the door and added, “we can afford a new one.”

Moments later, Emily, Dan and the other paramedics found Father Joe seated in a chair on the upper level of the rectory, sitting quietly. Father Joe said to Emily, “I know you would have been mad if I had not called 911.”

He was taken to St. Joseph hospital in Joliet where he passed away around 3:30 p.m.

Father Joseph Michael Shimanek was laid to rest at Resurrection Cemetery after his funeral at St. Pius X on November 18, 2005.



Father Joe with Emily Forsythe

The principal celebrant was Bishop Imesch and the Homily was delivered by Father James Lennon. Emily recalls Bishop Imesch’s observation at the time, “I wished I had three Joe Shimaneks.”

Father Joe once related to Emily that his parents were buried at St. Adalbert’s Cemetery in Niles. She recalled him saying, “Emily, you are the only one that will remember this.”

Unlike Father Joe’s worry about anyone remembering where his parents were laid to rest, none of us who knew him will ever forget him. Father Joseph M. Shimanek may be laid to rest at Resurrection Cemetery, but his love for his flock and for God lives on in our hearts and inspires us all to follow in his example of discipleship.

Robert Barron (Men’s 99th) is a member of St. Raphael’s parish and is Communications Secretary for the Joliet Cursillo.

Father Joe (Acknowledgments)

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Dan Sommers, St. Walter's Parish, Roselle

Dave Shimanek, Cousin

St. Procopius Abbey, Fr. James Flint, OSB (Abbey historian)

Renee Higdon Barron, St. Raphael Parish, Naperville

Ancestry.com

Mocavo.com



**University of Dayton,
Class of 1941**



**Joseph Shimanek
Age 4 years**



**With Deacon Rob Weierman at
St. Walter's Parish, 2001**



Father Joe with new car, 2000



"Have Chalice — Will Travel" (1994)

Father Shimanek: A Personal Reflection

(By Robert Barron)

I converted to the faith in 1997 through the RCIA program through St. Mary's my parish in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. My journey started years before at St Pius X parish in Lombard.

Renee Higdon (Women's 84th), a parishioner and CCD teacher at St. Pius X, was my first faith-witness.

She was also my girlfriend. Her parents Joe and Dolores

were the next, followed shortly by Father Shimanek.

I had overcome my fear of being in a Catholic church by joining Renee and her family at Mass, including a memorable midnight Christmas Eve Mass in 1979. I enjoyed Father's homilies and I was especially fascinated by the fact that he used a wireless microphone which

allowed him to be liberated from the ambo and address the congregation from whatever location he chose. I noticed that it helped keep folks engaged. He might be delivering his homily from right next to you!

In May 1980 Renee accepted my marriage proposal and we made plans to be married at St. Pius X the following May. During the wedding planning, Father

made me feel very much at ease even though I was not Catholic, not a practicing member of any faith, and also not baptized. That was zero-for-three, but he didn't hold it against me.

My father, an engineer, also came to know Father Shimanek and learned of Father's background as an electrical engineer at Western Electric. He also learned that the wireless microphone Father used in Mass was of his own design and construction!



At the 1981 wedding of Renee (Higdon) Barron to Bob, Father Shimanek holds his wireless microphone up to the nervous Groom so that the congregation would be sure to hear his vows.

(L-R) Steve and Jim Higdon are the altar servers.

As the distribution of the host began for our wedding Mass, I can still remember Father Shimanek reaching out to me first with a hearty handshake. That gesture put me at ease as the faithful received the Body and Blood of our Lord. His kindness and openness to me was my first interaction with a Catholic priest and quite clearly, it was a positive one which would pay dividends years later when I announced to my pastor in

New Jersey that I wanted to participate in RCIA.

Oh yes, the date of our wedding? May 24th, Father Shimanek's birthday!

My Back Pages

Thank-you, Thank-you Very Much...

Many thanks to Mike Iozzo for his years of service to Secretariat, most recently as Palanca Chair, but also as Pre-Cursillo Chair. Our prayers are with Mike as he continues his progress in the diaconate program.

Congratulations to John "YT" Whitehouse for joining Secretariat as our new Recording Secretary and as the leader of our new Parish Coordinator effort. (See below.)

Thanks also to Barb Linek, Tom Mayer and Lee Wirth for their article and photo contributions to this issue of the **Fourth Day** Newsletter.

Sponsorship Workshop to be Held at Our Lady of Peace, November 22nd

A fall Sponsorship Workshop will be held Saturday Nov 22nd at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Darien, 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. [Map] The workshop will start after the regular Ultreya. ALL Cursillistas are welcome and NEW Cursillistas are especially encouraged to attend to learn more about sponsoring friends and family for future Weekends.

Parish Coordinators Wanted

We have established a new role of Parish Coordinator. John "YT" Whitehouse will be leading this effort. The Parish Coordinators will serve as the primary contact person for new Cursillistas in the Parish as well as existing Cursillistas moving into the parish. We are also asking for help in keeping our diocesan Cursillo database up to date. Finally, we'd like the coordinators to help communicate Cursillo functions to the parish through the local bulletin and other social media outlets. The benefit of establishing a network of coordinators would be to help improve communications and take advantage of "best practices" being employed at other parishes.

If you discern you can help in this effort in your parish, please contact "YT" at whitehouse1728@gmail.com.

Upcoming Weekends for 2015

Feb 26 - Mar 1, 2015 (The Port)	Men's 129th	Rector: TBA
March 19-22, 2015 (DRC)	Women's 120th	Rectora: TBA
August 6-9, 2015 (The Port)	Women's 121st	Rectora: TBA
Oct 1-4, 2015 (DRC)	Men's 130th	Rector: TBA

Fechas de los Cursillos del 2014/15:

los hombres: 5-8 de marzo 2015 (Casa Mariana)

las mujeres: 9-12 de abril 2015 (Casa Mariana)

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