



# HARVARD CATHOLIC

*Magazine*

WINTER 2018



CELEBRATING FATHER GEORGE



ANNUAL REPORT EDITION *Fiscal Year 2017*

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## HARVARD CATHOLIC *Magazine*

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#### Senior Chaplain

Rev. William T. Kelly, STD

#### Graduate and Professional Schools Chaplain

Rev. George S. Salzmann, OSFS

#### Undergraduate Chaplain

Rev. Mark W. Murphy, MD, MAT

#### EVkids Chaplain

Heather Angell, MA

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### MISSION STATEMENT

The Harvard Catholic Center invites students, faculty, alumni and the greater University community to grow into a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ through the Roman Catholic tradition of worship, inquiry, prayer and service to develop informed and compassionate individuals who use their intellectual and spiritual gifts for the benefit of the Church and the world.



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Father Salzmann was on hand for Father Joe Keefe's first solemn Mass in the U.S., December 29, St. Bartholomew's Church, Needham, MA along with Will Clerx '14 (left) and Tom Keefe '16.

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# FROM THE DESK OF THE SENIOR CHAPLAIN



## *Dear Friends,*

It was about eight o'clock on the Sunday evening following Thanksgiving. I was in my office a few doors down from the parish chapel which is used daily for prayer by Harvard students. Hearing some activity and laughter, I came out to discover over a dozen undergrads who had come together to pray for all the students as they entered the final weeks of the semester. That vignette gives you a small insight into the kind of life we have here at the HCC: bright, motivated students supporting one another through their Catholic faith. In the pages of this magazine you will find many other examples of the ministry here. From the undergraduate freshman retreat all the way to spaghetti dinners and seminars on faith for post docs and students at the HBS and HLS, the Catholic Center provides social, spiritual, academic and pastoral experiences for all.

That is why I want to thank you, our alumni and donors, for the tremendous part you play in making this all happen. Your prayers and active financial support allow us to provide many ways to make Christ and His Church a pivotal lens through which our gifted students experience day-to-day life. It also helps them to discern not only career choices, but more significantly, how God can act through each person as agents of His love through their professional and personal lives.

In this edition in a special way, we are happy to highlight the extraordinary ministry of Father George Salzmänn, O.S.F.S. Fr. George has served as chaplain to the graduate and professional schools at Harvard for 25 years, with additional outreach to the young professionals in the area. He also recently celebrated his 40th anniversary as a priest. With his extraordinary gifts of faith, intellect and kindness, he has made the Harvard Catholic Center a significant part of the lives of so many in our community. I know you will enjoy reading more!

Plans are underway to honor Father George's amazing ministry and humble service by creating the Father George Salzmänn Graduate Chaplain Chair. The goal of this endowed fund is to raise \$1.5 million in order to generate the income necessary to allow the Harvard Catholic Center to continue to have a priest chaplain who will be dedicated to serving the spiritual needs of Harvard's graduate students, young professionals and new families for many, many years. More details on this tribute and how you can help are in this issue and on the back cover.

These past months I have visited with alumni in Boston, New York City, Chicago, Houston and Miami. It was a pleasure meeting with them, filling them in on all that is happening at the HCC and hearing their ideas as we move forward. We have also been reaching out to alumni who are in areas that have suffered from the terrible storms and fires over this past year, promising our prayers.

Please know that you are most welcome at the Harvard Catholic Center when you are visiting Harvard. We love to welcome individuals and groups!

With prayers for a blessed new year-

God bless,

Rev. William T. Kelly, S.T.D.  
*Pastor and Senior Chaplain*

# Archbishop Hebda AB '81 returns to Harvard to celebrate the Mass of the Holy Spirit

The Harvard Catholic Center was truly honored to have Archbishop Bernard Hebda back on campus to bless the academic year on Sunday, September 17 at the Mass of the Holy Spirit. Leading the Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis, Archbishop Hebda is in charge of an area that covers 12 counties, 187 parishes and approximately 825,000 Catholics. On June 15, 2015, Pope Francis named him Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and

Minneapolis and on March 24, 2016, Pope Francis named him Archbishop-Designate with his installation Mass occurring on Friday, May 13 of that year.



Above; McKenna Roberts '19 (center) and Gabby Schultz '21 (right) enthusiastically greet Archbishop Hebda after the Mass of the Holy Spirit. McKenna and Gabby had met the Archbishop previously when, as the then-Bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord, Michigan, he visited their high school, St. Mary Cathedral in Gaylord.



## HARVARD CATHOLIC CENTER WEBSITE GETS A MAKEOVER

The Harvard Catholic Center launched a new website for students, and for all members of its community, to coincide with the start of the 2017-2018 academic year. All Harvard Catholic students, post docs, young professionals, young couples, and new families can now easily find important liturgical and sacramental information such as Mass and Confession times on the home page. And faith-filled activities such as monthly pasta dinners, theology discussion groups, service projects, and more are all centralized in a virtual calendar. The new site offers abundant resources for 'worship, inquiry, prayer, and service,' the four pillars of the Center's mission, serving the nearly 20% of the Harvard student population that self-identifies as Catholic. Powered by a mission-driven organization called eCatholic, the new and improved [www.harvardcatholic.org](http://www.harvardcatholic.org) will function as the virtual center of Catholic life at Harvard. Rev. Mark Murphy was particularly enthusiastic, saying "we are thrilled that our website not only has a new, refreshed look but that it will

be far more sophisticated in serving the needs of all Harvard Catholics. We are blessed to finally roll it out!" The HCC invites students, alumni/ae, parents, donors, staff, volunteers, and all members of its community to visit [harvardcatholic.org](http://harvardcatholic.org) often. Virtual blessings! ♦



# FOCUS: Christ-centered evangelization, discipleship and friendships at Harvard

The Harvard Catholic Center has partnered with the Fellowship of Catholic University Students - FOCUS - since the 2012-2013 academic year. This year we welcome two new missionaries, Kaci Nguyen and Peter Nguyen, along with Ariana Ricarte and Matthew Balleza who return to complete their second year, and Harvard's very own Ben Kelly '17. All five, individually and collectively, make up a very dynamic team. Kaci is the team director at Harvard and has been with FOCUS for two years, most recently serving at George Washington University. She earned her undergraduate degree from University of Texas, Austin. Peter (no relation to Kaci) is new to FOCUS this year and graduated from Tulane University in May 2017. Peter, a native of New Orleans, says, "When I first found out that I was going to be at Harvard, I was blown away at being placed at such a top school. It has been amazing to see students at this Ivy League school who are very much passionate about their faith and who desire to live it out authentically! I have been happy since I started working with them and loving them. I know that the Harvard Catholic Student Association can only get bigger and better from here!"

Ariana, grew-up in La Mirada, California and is serving her second year on-campus. She earned her bachelor's degree from UCLA where she worked coordinating mental health programs for students on campus before becoming a FOCUS missionary. Born in Jerusalem, Israel but spending most of his life growing up in Annapolis, Matt is also a second year missionary at Harvard. He graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park and worked in Washington, DC before receiving the call to join FOCUS. The Catholic Center is also blessed to have Ben Kelly, AB '17, serving as a FOCUS missionary

during the 2017 fall term. Ben, who grew-up in Geneseo, New York is set to join a (still to be determined) college campus after January, 2018, in the greater Washington, DC area - close to his fiancé, Eliza DeCubelis AB '17 who is a FOCUS missionary at George Washington University.

With passion, commitment, and a strong faith, the FOCUS team is working hand in hand with our chaplains to reach the Harvard students, wherever they are, with the Gospel message. ♦



(l-r) Kaci Nguyen, Ben Kelly '17, Matt Balleza, Ariana Ricarte, and Peter Nguyen

## Lectures & Talks

The Harvard Catholic Center is privileged to host an array of theologians, scholars, and practitioners who share their expertise on campus throughout the academic year. Undergraduate and graduate students coordinate. In concert with our chaplains Fr. George Salzmann and Fr. Mark Murphy, undergraduate and graduate students coordinate an uplifting faith-filled speaker series that educates and informs.

In September, the Harvard Law School Catholic Student Association (HCLSA) invited Stanford Law School Professor James Sonne JD '97, to speak on the subject of religious liberty. Professor Sonne the Director of the Religious Liberty CLINIC at Stanford and described the approaches, challenges, and outcomes of working with clients of all faiths and defending their religious freedoms.

This fall term, Harvard welcomed back to campus author Mr. George Weigel, a Catholic theologian and one of America's leading public intellectuals. Mr. Weigel last spoke to Harvard Catholics fifteen years ago. His lecture in October, titled "Evangelical Catholicism: The

Future of the Church in the 21st Century", was attended by over sixty participants. Mr. Weigel is a leading expert on Pope John Paul II and has written two biographies about the beloved Holy Father.

There is also an active Thomistic Institute campus program at Harvard. For those unfamiliar, the Thomistic Institute exists to promote Catholic truth and to strengthen the intellectual formation of Christians at universities, in the Church, and in the wider public square. The theology of St. Thomas is their touchstone. The Thomistic Institute is part of the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, DC, and was founded in 2009. Professors and priests alike are invited from across the U.S. to bring their unique, faith-focused perspectives to secular campuses. ♦

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For more information visit [harvardcatholic.org/lectures](http://harvardcatholic.org/lectures) or [thomisticinstitute.org/campus-chapters](http://thomisticinstitute.org/campus-chapters)



# IN EARTHEN VESSELS

## Harvard students at the forefront of tutoring program

EVkids' original name—"Earthen Vessels"—was inspired by scripture: "*...we hold this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us.*" (2 Corinthians 4:7)

**I**t all started in 1980, with Eric Thompson's parents and a trial "summer camp" experience in rural Vermont for Eric '87, his brother Dan '89 and a half dozen of their friends. And it gave Marie-Claude and Brian Thompson an inspired idea: to make the experience available to low-income Boston kids who would not otherwise have such an opportunity to get out of the city. And so began "Earthen Vessels (later to be renamed "EVkids"), with the Thompsons bringing small groups of under-resourced Boston youth to Vermont for hiking, swimming and fresh air. It's a program that is still going strong 37 years later.

In 1985, the call to social justice led the Thompsons to expand their mission to include a Boston-based tutoring and mentoring program to address the difficult academic challenges faced by Boston's inner-city children and teens. That first school year, EVkids matched eight Dorchester students one-on-one with college tutors recruited through the Harvard Catholic Center.

"One of the camp counselors was a Catholic Student Association classmate, Rebecca Sheridan ('86), who recruited seven others to

form that first group of tutors," remembered Eric Thompson, who is now EVkids' Executive Director. "She and my mother proposed the program to then-St. Paul's pastor, Father (later Bishop) John Boles, who agreed to host Earthen Vessels at the student center, and it's been based at the Harvard Catholic Center ever since. It's fair to say we've had hundreds of Harvard's CSA volunteer over the years."

In recent years, students from Boston College and Tufts have expanded the volunteer corps. With Lesley University officially on board this past year and additional tutors from BU, Northeastern and UMass-Boston, EVkids expanded to 70 academic mentoring pairs (third through 12th grades) who meet in Dorchester once a week after school at two tutoring sites. But all Harvard events and meetings are at St. Paul's. Marie-Claude had an office there, and eventually was recognized as the Earthen Vessels chaplain. When she retired from that role, EVkids hired Heather Angell, who continues in that same position.

"I find that for Harvard students, their faith is a driving force in their decision to volunteer with us," said Heather. "They are really trying to live the Gospel, and embody Catholic social teaching. They want to make a dedicated impact. They are trying to do something positive."

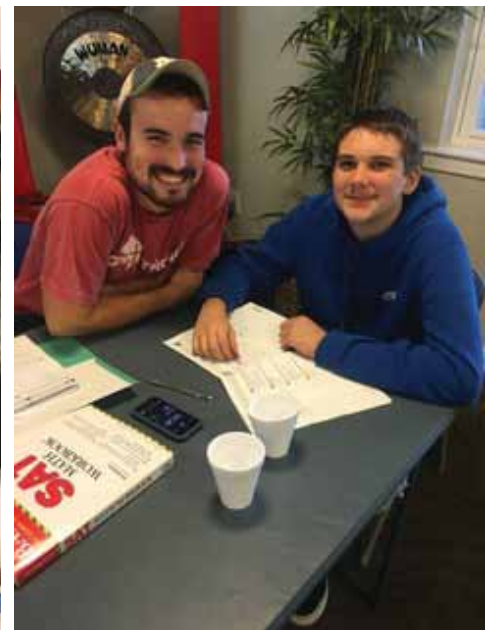
EVkids retains more than 80% of its tutors from year to year, and ideally, the volunteers will graduate with the young people with whom they've been working. All of the students this past school year live in Dorchester and Roxbury. Interestingly, more than 20% of the Harvard



Derya and Anne Marie Crinnion '20



Rahel Imru '21 and Famatta



Ben Kelly '17 and David



Michael with Guillermo Gomez '18, an EVkids tutor and friend

volunteers come from low-income backgrounds and are first generation college students themselves. "They want the kids to know they can do it too," said Heather, whose own education includes a master's degree in pastoral ministries at Boston College.

"A personal relationship with students is the driving motivating factor for volunteering. They can be counted on, and not just for academics. I find when that personal relationship takes hold, the commitment to the tutees becomes one of the highest priorities of their college lives."

Heather describes the mission this way: "Tutoring for school, mentoring for life." So what exactly do these volunteers bring to the EVkids mission as mentors?

"We take our volunteers where they're at in their spiritual lives," explained Eric Thompson. "Most were raised Catholic, even if they're not practicing as often as they did back home, and others may have been raised in a different church, but the beauty of it is that everyone comes with the same desire to help a child or teen, and that opens a door to a conversation about how their faith tradition informs their service. You may not know exactly what or how to say something, but God will fill in the rest, working through each tutor. That's a powerful idea for our college students."

And that one-on-one relationship with a young person is what allows those important conversations to take place. The given is that valuable academic lessons will be learned, but beyond that, friendships form. Trust develops. And the results can be transformative - for everyone involved.

"I've seen the impact not only on the kids, but on our tutors," said

**"I find when that personal relationship takes hold, the commitment to the tutees becomes one of the highest priorities of their college lives."**

**Heather Angell, EVkids' tutor director and chaplain**

Eric. "And it has a ripple effect as our Harvard students all go on to bigger and beautiful things. For them to be taken out of the Harvard bubble and introduced to a child in need is eye opening, giving them a perspective for whatever they end up doing in life, and hopefully planting that seed of service in those they mentor. We're all on 'the path,' and most will tell you this is one of the most meaningful experiences of their lives."

Eric Thompson gives a big shout out to the Harvard Catholic Center chaplains in supporting EVkids' ongoing effort. "Having (Senior Chaplain) Father Bill Kelly's full support is incredibly helpful. The chaplains really believe in what we're doing—that it's a valuable opportunity for Catholic students at Harvard."

So why the original name "Earthen Vessels?" As founder Marie-Claude Thompson describes it, "We are all like earthen vessels... imperfect, fragile, perhaps unremarkable containers, but we are meant to be filled with light and love."

Clearly, EVkids exists not only for the hundreds of young people who have been mentored over the years, but also for the hundreds of college-aged volunteers who learn that - imperfect vessels though they are - Our Lord is using them for a very important task: to plant the seeds of knowledge and service in those they mentor, even as they become aware of God's plan for themselves in serving others. ♦

For more information, contact EVkids' chaplain and tutor director Heather Angell at [heatherangell@evkids.org](mailto:heatherangell@evkids.org).





# BY GEORGE!

## Harvard's Graduate Chaplain Father George Salzmann Marks Three Milestones

By Scott Wahle

Every wall in his tiny office at the Catholic Center is plastered floor to ceiling with books of all sizes and subjects. And on every other available surface – desk top, cabinet doors, window sill – are photos of family, friends, and dozens of students whom Father George Salzmann, O.S.F.S. has befriended over his quarter century as the Harvard Catholic Center's graduate chaplain. He can name them all, and can tell you the story behind every photo. Got a minute?

Those who know and love Father George will not be surprised that our far-ranging conversations took several side trips along the way, zigging and zagging as one story begat another, one name recalled another. Over the course of two fascinating sessions with the engaging 68 year-old priest, I would learn about his mom and dad, his beloved Uncle Frank and the priests who influenced his own decision to join the priesthood. But other historical characters and events also found their way into the conversation, among them William the Conqueror, the Manhattan Project, the Cuban missile crisis, the tumor suppressor gene "P53," Lord Rutherford (the "father of nuclear physics"), and, oh yes, Grace Kelly, too. And it all made sense in the end.

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*"Why be a priest if you're not helping people? Reaching out to people is what a priest does."*

If you see him around campus (and you will), you may congratulate Father George on his anniversary. Make that anniversaries, plural: 25 years as Harvard's graduate chaplain, and 40 years as a priest of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales. 2017 also marks 30 years since he earned his doctorate from Harvard in biochemistry and 50 years since joining his order out of high school. He is a man of letters (two theology degrees at the Gregorian University in Rome), and also a man of science ("I was at Yale in molecular biophysics and biochemistry before finishing at Harvard. My advisor's advisor studied under Sir James Chadwick, and his adviser was Lord Rutherford.") And after his Ph.D. in biological chemistry at Harvard Medical School, Father Salzmann was a post-doctoral fellow at Princeton for the founder and chair of the molecular biology department - ("the man who discovered P53," notes Father George) - and also taught bio-ethics in the religion department there. You can imagine him being equally comfortable discussing St. Francis de Sales, Galileo, and Charles Darwin, and you would be right.







But Salzmman is first a man of God, whose Roman collar suits him well. Father George is chaplain to both Harvard grad students and the area's young professionals. He is a ubiquitous figure on campus, introducing himself to all at the back of St. Paul church before and after every Mass ("My manic Sunday rush to reach out to everyone is to fulfill Pope Francis' hope that we priests welcome everyone full well"), engaging young people in conversation on campus ("I'm shy by nature, so I have to work hard to reach out"), and greeting all at the spaghetti dinners and other activities of the Harvard Catholic Center that have led to important discussions of life and faith, life-long friendships among students and with him, and countless marriages over the years. Father Salzmman may have officiated at more Harvard weddings than any clergyman in the school's history (as the Harvard Faculty Committee on Religion recently wrote him) and that is because he may have introduced more people to each other than anyone. Most of those romances began with a "hello" at a Catholic Center activity, with many of those introductions initiated by Salzmman himself.

"We need to love God and our neighbor, and let God and our neighbor love us," says Father George. "People need to meet, which is why we try all these different approaches at the Catholic Center - dinners, wine and cheese get-togethers, liturgies. . . Mass every Sunday is still best for crossing paths with God and others, connecting us with all Catholics and the wisdom of the centuries. All these things give people the chance to build friendships. The more ties they have, the more stable they will be during the onslaught of graduate study."

He loves telling the story of the graduate alum and a young professional who recently came up to him separately just seconds apart saying the very same thing: "It's because of you that I'm married to the loveliest woman in the world!" they exclaimed. Father George had counseled each years ago to seek out women who shared their values, and not try to convince themselves that their girlfriends at the time were the right ones. They weren't.

"The whole point is not playing 'Marrying Sam,' but being a priest who helps young professionals easily meet those compatible to them, with similar standards and values," insists Father George. "I just try to introduce good people to good people."

He notes that he is meeting young people at an important time in their lives. "I get to talk to them when they are beginning to ask questions about what they've been taught, and help them come to understand the Catholic tradition," he says.



**George E. and Jean (Bigley) Salzmman raised their son, George, to be a dedicated student who became an avid reader at an early age.**

But there are others who feel themselves breaking under the pressure of school and think they were an admissions mistake; they are in need of different counsel. "They come to see me on their way out of town, but I say 'hold on, let's think about this a minute.' It almost always works out." And then there are the most desperate conversations of all: with students who have come to believe they are a mistake.

"No one knows about the many graduates whom I've talked out of committing suicide over the years, many now prominent alumni. It's like the dog that didn't bark. In shame they can't talk to anybody, but I walk around campus all the time and stop students so they can say 'the next thing'...giving them a moment to express thoughts they hadn't been able to express to anyone." Years later, the graduates might not even speak of it to him, but they remember, and Father George remembers, too.

"People say 'you work hard, Father,'" explains Father George. "I do try, but I always feel I should multiply by 100 the people I meet. There is so much more to do."

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***"I was sure I would never be a priest because I didn't like to kneel. I was never an altar boy for that reason."***

Well, sometimes, things change.

Growing up in Philadelphia, Salzmann was taught to read and write at an early age by his mother ("to keep me occupied," he says), and young George developed an insatiable appetite for books and knowledge. He remembers his watchful mother looking over his shoulder as the first grader did his homework, and saying, "George, that needs a semicolon!" His father's best friend, Dr. Frank, would bring him a stack of books each month when passing by on his house calls, and George would glean what he could, and that was a lot. And the education continued on Saturday outings with his beloved Uncle Frank. They were among his happiest memories.

"Uncle Frank was a genius...lovable, kind to everyone. He would



**Father Paul Donovan, chaplain for the British Royal Navy on the Harvard Medical School campus, circa, 1982 when Father George was pursuing his Ph.D.**

take me downtown on his errands every Saturday and buy me lunch, and talk about the books he had read. So here's this third grader learning about how an expert on William the Conqueror's movements on the beaches of Normandy in 1066 (a classmate of Uncle Frank's) gave the allies insight on where to land on D-Day, and the Great Fire of London in the 1600s and how it influenced the way streets would be laid out in Philadelphia...so many stories..."

Salzmann would follow his uncle to North Catholic High School, at one time the largest Catholic school in the country, and taught by the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales. Uncle Frank had a great love for the Order, and that was good enough for George. But early on, this future priest was definitely on a science track.

"I loved astronomy and physics - get a Ph.D. in that and be happy, I thought." And that led to a summer program at Cornell before his senior year in high school. "It was a week to teach yourself calculus and then take courses in quantum mechanics and relativity," said Father George. "Hans Bethe was there - he was head of theoretical physics for the Manhattan project and a Nobel Prize winner," he added. So once again, he was surrounded by the best in the business. But something was missing.

But something was missing. "Lord Rutherford said, 'any damn fool can interpret good data!'" quoted Salzmann. "Life is 'lousy data,' in a sense - good people suffer, as did Our Lord; we come together every Sunday to make some sense of it, that we are loved by God. Otherwise, nothing makes sense."

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***"I can't think of a better calling. I'm grateful to be a priest, to be able to help people and to be helped in turn by their faith and devotion."***

Virtually every priest can name other priests they knew growing up who helped lead them to their own vocation, and that was true of Father George as well. There were high school teachers Father Ray Fleck ("he got me interested," remembers Salzmann) and Father John Foley ("a great physics teacher"). Father William Dougherty ("my most influential teacher"), newly ordained, would spend late afternoons with everyone after school was out, and the Catholic chaplain at Cornell, Father Richard Tormey, would discuss with George the latest documents coming out of the Second Vatican Council, which was underway in Rome at the time.

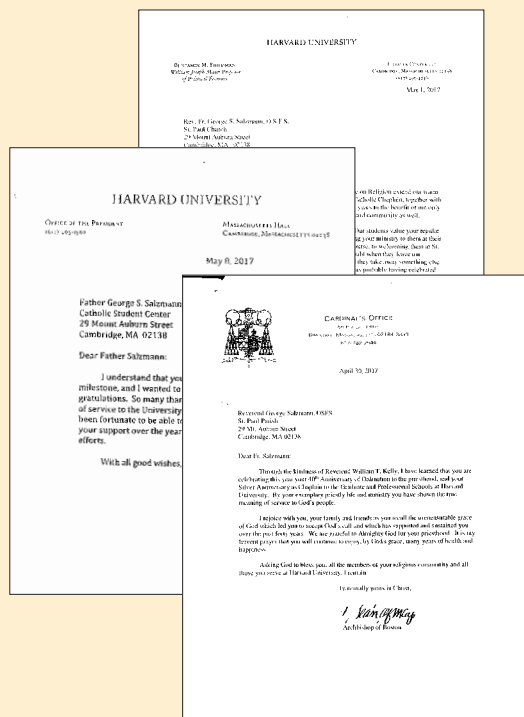
"I realized that summer at Cornell that I wanted to do more than just physics, that I wanted to help people and bring them - and myself, God willing - to God, letting them know of God's great love for all of us. I wanted to be a priest in a teaching order, so thought I should give the Oblates a try." But Father George offers another angle to the vocation story that certainly will get one's attention.

"The atom bomb led to my vocation," he says, matter-of-factly. OK...and how was that, Father?

"I was in high school during the Cuban missile crisis...twelve days after Vatican II opened...people thought the world was coming to an end. No one went to lunch - everyone went to chapel to pray as soon as the bell rang. I was too simple to ever change. That's how I became a priest—I just kept on praying..."

And so he entered the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, first attending





**"Your service in our community is well known, Father. Our students value your regular counsel, and they are especially grateful for your effort in taking your ministry to them at their respective graduate and professional schools. What you do improves their lives at Harvard. By now, they, and we, think of you as probably having celebrated more marriage ceremonies than any other clergyman in Harvard's history."**

**Benjamin Friedman, Chair, University Committee on Religion**

**"The Harvard community has been fortunate to be able to rely on your warmth and your support over the years, and we are grateful for your efforts."**

**Drew Gilpin Faust, Harvard University President**

**"By your exemplary priestly life and ministry you have shown the true meaning of service to God's people...We are grateful to Almighty God for your priesthood. It is my fervent prayer that you will continue to enjoy, by God's grace, many years of health and happiness."**

**Cardinal Seán O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston**

Yale, and spending the next four years studying in Rome. When it came time to become a deacon, he was to be assigned to Monaco, of all places. ("The Oblates had the biggest church in Monte Carlo, and the chaplaincy of Grace Kelly," he says), but "deaconate" means "service," and Salzmann, wondering who would be served in Monte Carlo, asked for a "tougher" parish. He got his wish. "I was offered an assignment in Liverpool, England," he recalls. "The second week I was there, they burned down two rooms in the school."

Salzmann's father had died the year after he entered the order, and his first Mass in his home parish in Philadelphia was his mother's funeral - one year and one month after his ordination in Rome.

"My dad had been against me becoming a priest; he wanted me to go into science. On Pentecost Sunday of my senior year, he gave his permission, but not his blessing. I entered the Oblates on my birthday, June 19th, 1966, Father's Day. A decade later, I got back to Rome after the funeral for my mother, and found her last letter to me sitting on my desk..."

*Monday, May 15th, '78*  
*Dear George,*

*In 1966 the 15th was Sunday, the feast of Pentecost and you had a long talk with dad and he finally gave permission for you to go into the Oblates. (I was upstairs praying) and as so many times (before) the Holy Spirit came through...you have had a life that to some may seem easy, but I know how hard it's been...the Holy Spirit will be always there for you, for me, for us all...*

Father George took it as a sign from heaven, and indeed it was. But much more recently, he received another sign, just as important, and just as welcome. His relationship with his father had been a complicated one, and not just because his dad wasn't too keen on the priest

idea. As a priest, he had preached God's mercy and forgiveness, but wrestled with his own ability to forgive. But on this most recent feast of the Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was there for George, just as his mother had promised.

"I was visiting the shrine to Our Lady at Lourdes at Pentecost, and thinking I really have to forgive my father completely. He was well known for his "Palm Beach-style" wardrobe and look. Praying about him at Mass there, I happened to look inside my jacket, and for the first time I noticed the logo of the maker: 'Palm Beach.' I was always saying it, but reneging on my promise to forgive totally. But that day I felt I was hearing from my father, in a sense." And with it, came peace.

After his post-doctoral work at Princeton, Father George had two options: neuroscience at Stanford or the graduate chaplain's post at Harvard. We know the rest of the story - he chose the chaplaincy after passing muster from no fewer than five committees and two levels of interviews! And he has been there ever since, meeting and greeting and counseling and administering the Sacraments to Harvard's graduate students and the area's young professionals. We wanted to know: Is there a passage from the Bible that encapsulates his mission as a priest? Father George's answer came swift and sure:

"Luke 6:36 - 'Be compassionate as your heavenly Father is compassionate.' It's the whole gospel in one line: Father...to Son...to us."

***"When I was a kid, a poster of a sunrise hung in my room, and on it, it said, 'All I know of tomorrow is that Providence will rise before the sun.'"***

We can imagine Father George jokingly adding a disclaimer that that's still all he knows. That would not be true at all, of course - The Reverend George Salzmann OSFS knows a lot about a lot of things. And that's more than enough. ♦

# REFLECTIONS ON FATHER GEORGE

*“Father George sees every person as a reason to love and serve Christ more deeply. He is beloved for his compassion, intellect, generosity and devotion to Harvard students and beyond the University.”*

*—Father Bill Kelly, Senior Chaplain*

## Bryan Walsh

Bryan Walsh, MPP/MTS 2004, recalls meeting a boisterous Father Salzmann upon stepping into St. Paul’s Church on a sweltering summer Sunday in 2001. “Father Salzmann became a bedrock of my three years of Harvard graduate study and beyond,” says Walsh. “More and more, it seems priests are constantly hopping from one place to the next after a couple of years but Father George has rooted himself in a place, becoming an institution to an institution! I really saw the fruits in the scores of devotees at his anniversary Mass in April. He has exhibited to so many people the very best of the Church—no small feat amid some, shall we say challenging, decades at Harvard, in Boston, and in the Church at large.” Walsh’s wife, Katherine Hebert, MTS 2003, says: “Father George has always been a warm, intelligent, comforting, grounding force in our lives. His friendship with my husband grew into a familial bond that included pre-Cana, followed by our wedding at the Cathedral in Boston, and most recently, the baptism of our son, Leo, at Holy Trinity in Georgetown.” Hebert, though not a Catholic, still couldn’t imagine these occasions any other way: “These events are the cornerstones of our life and they were cemented, celebrated, and made possible because of Father George.”



Bryan Walsh with his wife, Kathy and their son Leo were on hand for the anniversary Mass in April.

## James Agolia HMS '20

“Father George has been a dedicated and enthusiastic shepherd for the Catholic student community at Harvard Medical School. Instead of allowing the distance between the campuses to separate us from the university community, Father George has always made the effort to reach out to us, inviting us to Harvard Catholic events and visiting the Longwood campus often to celebrate Mass. His jovial personality, storytelling ability, wealth of knowledge, and experience bridging science and religion make him a phenomenal pastor for us, and we are so grateful to have him.”

James Agolia, Harvard Medical School Class of 2020 to the right of Cardinal O’Malley, pictured with other HMS students at the Guild of St. Luke’s “White Mass” this fall





**Leanne Gaffney AB '07, EdM '12, JD '15**  
**Assistant Director of Career Services,**  
**Harvard University**

"Father George Salzmann has been incredibly devoted to all Catholic students and young professionals. He has been there for me while I obtained two graduate school degrees and continues to offer his support now that I am a young professional. He is kind, warm, and full of good cheer and humor. I know that his ministry has meant much so many of us here at Harvard and St. Paul."

Leanne Gaffney at the anniversary Mass  
for Father George



**Dean and Stephanie Khurana**

"Having a Catholic and Hindu wedding was no easy feat," recalls Stephanie (Ralston) Khurana. "Looking into Father George's background, we thought he was someone who could bridge complicated worlds, a good person to talk to. He does not let obstacles get in the way of the deeper meaning of things."

Stephanie and Rakesh Khurana met Father Salzmann as graduate students at Harvard. She was Catholic - he was Hindu. Deeper meanings aside, there were also the logistical issues, such as getting dispensations from the Church, and incorporating a fire that was required for a Hindu rite. And "Father George figured it out," with back-to-back ceremonies at Swedenborg Chapel and in Annenberg Hall on campus, first with Father Salzmann, and then a second ceremony with a Hindu priest.

"Today, it's more common, but at the time, it was daunting and complicated to bring our two faith traditions and cultural traditions together with a vision that Stephanie and I had," says Rakesh. "Father George told us that our strength would come from our diversity. We embraced that, and it enabled us to realize the kind of start spiritually that we wanted."

"He elevates your spirit...he's joyous, happy. He draws everyone to him, and invites you to seek deeper meaning. That's why he connects so well with the Harvard students," adds Stephanie. "As for our relationship, he said 'you can go to a car dealer and test drive a bunch of cars, but at some point you have to pick one and experience the journey!'"

For the Khuranas, it has been a journey that continues to include Father George,

"He calls out of the blue," says Rakesh, "and always at the right minute. It's not the words that matter, it's the walk, and

he walks his words. He has an inclusive attitude. In all my dealings with him over the past 23 years, he has never made me feel anything other than included and part of something bigger. His intellectual side is very appealing, his philosophy around the big questions: Who are we? What is our character? What are we trying to become? What does it mean to live a good life?"

The Khuranas have learned what countless others have discovered over Father George's 25 years as Harvard's graduate chaplain: when he gets to know you, you stay known.

"Just knowing he's there is a good feeling," says Rakesh. "If you need anything, you just know he'll be there for you."

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*Rakesh Khurana, PhD '98 is the Danoff Dean of Harvard College. He and his wife Stephanie MBA '96, MPP '96, who were married by Father Salzmann in 1996, serve as faculty deans of Cabot House.*



Rakesh and Stephanie Khurana

## Tim Belton MBA '94, Bellaire, Texas and his wife Elisabeth reflect on their time at Harvard Business School and their life-long friendship with Father George that continues to this day.

“Hell week” is always so much fun for first-year b-school students, going through back-to-back interviews at all hours trying to get the ideal summer internship! To add to my excitement, I had the flu for the first time in my life with a temp bouncing up to 104, all the while worrying about my father having prostate cancer surgery back in Houston. When I was back at our apartment from interviewing (with the flu), Father George came to the rescue. He brought me Holy Communion and his pastoral heart, along with a couple bottles of soda and popsicles. And he also brought his contagious smile and giggle, which was no doubt part of the cure!



Elisabeth and Tim at Father's anniversary Mass

Father George loved to create joy with activity when our family would visit the HBS Campus or when he was staying at our home. During one visit to Texas for the baptism of one of our children, Father George, as always, gave everyone an opportunity to participate in the celebration of the Mass, especially the kids, whether it was holding the processional cross, carrying the altar cloths the book of scriptures, or being a reader or altar server. Most families would begin the baptism at the altar or where the baptismal font was located, but not Father George. We all walked down the center aisle signing songs and processed to the Baptismal font at the front of the church, all performing our responsibilities. In our home, it was the same thing. You couldn't just sit on your couch as the Mass started; it

was a processional walk with everyone in tow around the den, singing. And then the Mass could begin.

Father George was really giving of his time when we visited Boston. He would give us the best tours around the undergraduate Harvard campus, and surely someone he knew was sure to be on the route and he always introduced us. Along the tour he could tell you every little detail, from the sayings on the passageways to all the history of the people of the various generations that were involved with the University. We are always amazed at how much history he can absorb and recite. He even took our family to eat in a residential house at Harvard. What a treat that was for our kids, and we were able to meet many of the students. Father George knew and knows many of them, and they all seemed to love him too. It is not surprising that he knows people all over the world; if you ever call him and ask for a contact he is sure to have one in every place you can imagine.

Father George is probably the kindest person you'll ever meet. When we travelled to Boston for a family reunion, part of the itinerary was a must see visit to Father George. He showed us his office, and we were in awe with all the many pictures—yes he takes lots and lots of photos! And he has lots and lots of books. During that visit, our son, also named George (eight or nine years old at the time) happened to like to play “church” (we secretly hoped one day he'd find a vocation to the priesthood), and was admiring Father George's purple confessional stole. So after a few more minutes of visiting, he gives the kids each a little something, a prayer card or his business card (haha) and for our son George it was his purple stole. He put it on and it was so long it touched the floor with inches of fabric. Our George's smile was beaming from one side of his face to the other. When Father George visited us in Texas he stayed in our home, and he often said Mass there. He would ask George if he could use the purple stole; we always kept it in a special place awaiting his arrival. Sadly, George passed in an accident in April, 2012, when he was 13 years old. Father George was one of the celebrants at the funeral Mass and internment. Father George asked me for the purple stole and put it in George's coffin, saying something to the effect that he'd be a priest in heaven and with the King of Kings, and asked me to imagine George processing with Our Lord to all the special places with many disciples all dressed in colorful robes and stoles, with adorned horses and with knights, armor and all. It gave me pure joy and a sense of healing...his beautiful and kind words, I can still truly picture. ♦



# The Father George Salzmann Graduate Chaplain Chair

5 university degrees  40 years ordained

4 University presidents during his 25 years at Harvard

25 years as chaplain to the Harvard Graduate Schools



100s of weddings of Harvard grads celebrated

100s of baptisms of Harvard grads' children

5 Senior Chaplains served with

300 pasta dinners



775 Masses at the Business School

375 Masses at the Law School

300 Masses at the Medical School



IN APRIL 2017, FATHER GEORGE celebrated the 40th anniversary of his ordination. He has given more than one-half of his priestly life to Harvard students to help them grow closer to a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ. As an alumnus of Harvard, PhD '87, he understands the challenges and demands facing students at the graduate schools. He has celebrated countless weddings and baptisms of graduate students and has been a loving friend when a difficult situation arises. But, most importantly, Father Salzmann has been a man of God, living as Jesus has taught and has been a witness of His love and friendship for each of us, and always with a joyful smile.

To honor his dedication to the Harvard Catholic community an endowed chair is being established with a **goal of raising \$1.5 million dollars**. The *Father George Salzmann Graduate Chaplain Chair* will provide the resources necessary for the Harvard Catholic Center to fund a priest chaplain on staff who is dedicated to the graduate students, faculty, young couples, new families and young professionals. Through Father George's priestly ministry, thousands of Harvard alumni have been formed in faith and enriched by the blessings of Father's love, friendship and humble service.

With the endorsement of Father's religious order, the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, and with the support of the Harvard Catholic community, the goal will be achievable. The effort to fully endow this chair is already underway and the appeal for your help with this campaign will be coming soon. The next chaplain to the Harvard graduate schools will carry the title, "Father George Salzmann Graduate Chaplain Chair" – a fitting tribute to our dear friend who has given so much of his life to bringing Jesus Christ to the Harvard graduate campuses.







# VOCATIONS START AT HOME

## Father Joe Keefe AB'04

**Father Joseph Keefe '04, was ordained a priest of Opus Dei** (known to members as “the Work”) earlier this year in Rome. Joe Keefe is one of 11 children born to Patti and John '70 Keefe, five of whom attended Harvard. In our continuing series about Harvard men and women in religious life, editor Scott Wahle spoke with Father Keefe about his vocation and the singular path to the priesthood for a member of Opus Dei.

“Joe was exposed to the graces of witnessing a generous marriage growing up. Joe breathed that atmosphere, and it led to his own vocation.”

Father Dave Cavanagh, AB '72  
Opus Dei priest



**Patti and John AB '70 Keefe along with Father Joe's sister, Emily Keefe Marcucci AB '99 at the ordination, April 29, 2017, Basilica de San Eugenio, Rome**

**SW:** A priestly vocation in Opus Dei may or may not spring from a commitment to be a numerary in Opus Dei. Can you explain?

**Fr. Keefe:** The vocation to the priesthood is the same across the different realities within the Church, since it is essentially a calling from God to share in the ministerial priesthood of Christ, and to act on behalf of the Church in the care of souls. But yes, you are right that the path of discernment to the priesthood for a member of Opus Dei is rather different than it might be for a diocesan seminarian or for someone in a religious order.

I am 35 years old right now, but I joined Opus Dei at the age of 18, as a celibate member (numerary), so from very early on I had already discerned my vocation of total self-giving to God in the middle of the world as a layman. At that time, the priesthood was not really on my radar; I was drawn more to Opus Dei's secular mission, which for me meant the sanctification of my work and a broad apostolate carried out among my peers, without distinguishing myself from them at all. I did my undergrad at Harvard in art history, and then worked for a couple of years in an architecture studio in New York City that specializes in historic restoration.

While I was working full-time in New York, I wrote our prelate (Bishop Javier Echeverria, who recently passed away), telling him that I would be willing to serve Opus Dei in whatever capacity was needed. Knowing that the Work asks some numeraries to start our apostolate in new countries, I told him I'd be up for that (mentioning Africa as an area of preference!). I also told him that I would be willing to have a go at the preparations necessary for priestly ordination, and discern that path, or stay put and continue my professional career (I had just been accepted to a doctoral program in art history at Columbia). So in a sense, God's gift of celibacy was allowing me to give Him a "blank check," to place myself in His hands, with full trust. It also felt like an adventure - I

could end up anywhere, doing just about anything!

**SW:** And the Bishop's response?

**Fr. Keefe:** Shortly thereafter, he invited me to move to Rome to start my studies in theology. And ten years later, with a doctorate in dogmatic theology from the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, I received the diaconate from Bishop Javier in October, shortly before his passing. And now the priesthood...So I guess the path to becoming a priest in the Work isn't as linear as it might be in a diocesan seminary, and I think the reason for that is that numeraries aren't really discerning in the same way, since we have already committed ourselves definitively to a vocation which is rooted in apostolic celibacy. The priesthood for us is another way of serving God within the larger panorama of our mission in Opus Dei.

**SW:** How connected were you to the Catholic Center while at Harvard?

**Fr. Keefe:** I certainly had connections with the HCC as an undergrad, and still remain in contact with Father George (Salzmann), who has supported me through it all. I credit his prayers over these past 15 years! I have fond memories of daily Mass and Adoration at St. Paul's, as well as study breaks in the former student center. Many of my closest friendships were formed with kids from the Harvard Catholic Center, and we would have Rosary sessions or go out for crepes on Arrow Street. I lived in Adams House, so after daily Mass I would often invite people to breakfast in our dining hall.

Elmbrook, the center of Opus Dei near campus, was obviously the hub of my spiritual life. I lived there my junior and senior years. But most of my day was spent on



**Father Joe's nieces, Tabitha (L) and June (R) are all smiles, seeing their uncle at the ordination reception.**



The Harvard connection on hand for the ordination (l-r): Michael Marcucci, '98; John Keefe Sr., '70; Jim Schultz, HLS '11; Fr. Joseph Keefe, '04, John Keefe '01, Tom Keefe '16, Helen Keefe '11, Emily Keefe Marcucci '99

campus, and much of my interior journey was enriched through times of prayer at St. Paul's Church and through camaraderie with other Catholics in classes, meals, etc. One big thing I learned while an undergrad was the need to "give reason" to my faith, considering the position of people who put into question even the most basic tenets of my life, which then led me to return to the books to seek deeper understanding. I credit some very dear friendships with non-Catholic and non-Christian guys for strengthening my faith through their questions and personal concerns. Those friends have endured to this day, and two of them even made the trek out to Rome for the ordination!

**SW:** Did you think about being a priest someday when you were a child?

**Fr. Keefe:** There were certainly moments when, as a child, I thought about the priesthood. My parents instilled in us a love and reverence for priests at a very early age. Every Saturday we would go to a nearby parish for confessions with an older Opus Dei priest (Father Dick Rieman). Even for us kids who were too little to actually go to confession, my mom would encourage us to "duck into the box" and simply chat with the priest, about whatever we wanted. We

had a grand old time, especially since Father Dick would always make us laugh with his jokes. All of this was establishing a kind of "family culture" that helped us to build up confidence in the priest, and see the sacrament as something attractive, joyful, deeply merciful and consoling. Another memory: both my maternal and paternal grandfathers must have intuited the priesthood in me well before I did, since they would each often ask me as a young child if I ever thought of being one. They were planting a seed.

**SW:** What was the ordination like? Can you believe the faculties you now have?

**Fr. Keefe:** The ordination and the first solemn Mass, in the words of my mother, were "a slice of heaven." The sacrament itself is deeply mysterious. In complete silence, the Bishop laid his hands on my head, as the entire people of God invoked the Holy Spirit. In that moment, I could almost physically feel the Paraclete marking me with that indelible seal of the priesthood. And the very idea of celebrating Mass, acting in persona Christi, lending the Son of God my hands and voice as He carries out the Sacrifice of our Redemption... it still gives me chills, and I am now doing it every day. I often ask Jesus that I may never

grow accustomed to this miracle that takes place before me. And I also turn to Our Lady with that spiritual communion I learned in the Work: "I wish my Lord to receive you with the purity, humility and devotion with which your most Holy Mother received you, with the spirit and the fervor of the saints."

**SW:** The Keefes are a Harvard family if ever there was one. And your dad tells me everyone made it to the ordination!

**Fr. Keefe:** It was an incredible joy beyond words to have my entire family present for the event. I have 10 siblings, six in-laws, and 22 nieces and nephews. Needless to say, it's very hard for us to all get together. This was the first time in six years that we all made it!

And yes, we do have a fierce Harvard connection, perhaps even record-breaking. My father is Class of '70, and of the 11 children, five of us are graduates of Harvard College (Emily '99, John '01, myself '04, Helen '11, and Tom '16). Add in Emily's husband Michael Marcucci ('98) and my sister Molly's husband Jim Schultz (Harvard Law, '11), and you've got a party!



**We are a singing family**, and for Joey's first Mass, my brother John headed up the sibling choir that provided the music. One of the songs we sang during communion was Thomas Tallis' "If Ye Love Me." It's one that we've sung at a lot of our family weddings, and the text is a portion of Jesus' final discourse at the Last Supper with his disciples, making it especially appropriate for the occasion of Joey's first Mass: 'If ye love me, keep my commandment. And I will pray the Father and He will give you another Comforter, to abide with you forever, the Spirit of Truth.'

*Helen Keefe '11, Joe's sister*

**Joe was always an extremely cheerful**, happy person...he had a way of connecting with people of all ages. More than once when he was in middle school, a mother would come up to me and say 'Oh, Mr. Keefe, you don't know me, but my little girl isn't one of the popular kids, and Joe treats my daughter as one of the popular ones. It makes her feel special.'

*John Keefe '70, Joe's father*

**Joe is the product of a normal family**; he was exposed to the graces of witnessing a generous marriage growing up. As Saint Josemaría Escrivá (the founder of Opus Dei) would say, more than 90 percent of a person's vocation is from our parents. Joe breathed that atmosphere, and it led to his own vocation."

*Opus Dei priest Father Dave Cavanagh '72 knew Joe's parents when Patti and John were dating at Harvard*

**I met Father Joe when he was just "Joe."** He was assigned to be the director of the older boys at Leadership Camp Texas, a camp for boys grades 5-8 that focuses on all the fun that is summer camp along with the development of virtues and a natural sense of piety. For a Yankee, he was pretty hardy – running up and down the Texas Hill Country trails in 100 degree heat. I fondly recall his excellent singing voice and his huge toothy smile. The boys were drawn to him by his cheerfulness and sense of meeting others where they are, as if each was the most important person in the world. These will be excellent foundations for his priestly vocation, as they are excellent reflections of Christ. *Ipse Christus*. I'm grateful for his friendship and his vocation.

*Tim Belton, MBA '94, Bellaire, Texas*



All of Father Joe's siblings (11) and their spouses (6) attended the ordination at the Basilica de San Eugenio, Rome, April 29, 2017.

# "I WOULDN'T BE ANYWHERE ELSE"

## Sr. Sofia Millican AB'05 embraces the contemplative life

*In 2007, Frances Elizabeth Millican, '05, became Sister Sofia Millican, OCSO (the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance, also known as the Trappists – a contemplative religious order that traces its roots back to the year 1098). Sister Sofia lives with about 40 other cloistered nuns at the Mount St. Mary's Abbey in Wrentham, Massachusetts, where their monastic life emphasizes solitude, community, prayer and manual labor. The abbey sells 50-thousand boxes of chocolate a year! Originally from the UK, Sister Sofia, in her own words, shares the journey that brought her first to Harvard, and eventually to Mount St. Mary's.*

**I don't remember** a time when I had no sense of God in my life. I have always been intent on finding out what it would mean to have God at the center of my life – to live the way the people in the Bible did, like Abraham, who left his family and home and went out to a place he didn't know and put his life in God's hands. They were very real, those biblical personalities, the lives of the saints, the martyrs...so real and compelling to me as a child. I wondered, "How can I live my life in a way that answers that call of God?" I knew that God was near to me, loved me, and had a plan for me. We had nuns in our parish and knew them, but the thought of becoming one myself didn't enter my mind at the time. Years later, I came to see that what being a nun means is to belong to God completely. That is what I wanted all along.

I was born in England, but our family moved to Wales when I was four years old, and I lived there until I was 18. There are very few Catholics in South Wales – only about three percent of the population – so in terms of faith formation I just had my family and my parish. Growing up, I didn't know many people who were educated in, and passionate about their faith. My mother and grandmother

were the most important influences in my faith life, intent as they were on raising my brother and me in the Church. Together we would go to Mass, read the Bible and pray the rosary. My father, Peter, is not a person of faith, but was supportive and open. He said to me, "I just want you to be happy."

When the time came to think of college, I wasn't satisfied with options in the UK. The tendency there is to specialize immediately. One applies for one's intended field of study and focuses only on that. I wanted something broader, and I got the idea into my head to go to America. The admissions process was more expensive and complicated than in the UK, so I didn't apply to many schools. Harvard attracted me because of its strong liberal arts program and the stimulating environment it provided. The school is also very welcoming toward international students, and I was offered enough financial aid for my parents to feel they could manage. I had never travelled abroad and had no connections, so I came for a pre-frosh weekend in April 2001 in order to make a final decision. During those days I felt sure this was the place for me. I met people with so many different gifts and aspirations in life...people who cared about things that mattered. I had the sense that I could grow as a person there.

While at Harvard, I went to the student Mass regularly, and also was involved in the parish as an altar server, Eucharistic minister and lector. I coordinated the speaker series at the Catholic Student Association for a while, and went on one of the annual retreats. I was helped greatly by Father Tom Brennan and Father Bill Murphy, undergraduate chaplains, the second of whom became my spiritual director. When I first attended the Sunday Mass, I was amazed by how many people attended. It was a big change for me to have peers who were committed to their Catholic faith. I met people that I could have real heart-to-heart conversations with about God, His place in our lives, and what this might mean for our life choices.

The first thought of a religious vocation came to me at the beginning of my sophomore year. It didn't happen in the context of knowing a sister, or a particular order; rather, it was an organic development from my own inner journey and the struggles that were on the table for me as a freshman. I was trying to find out how my faith should manifest itself in my life. I knew I wanted to be consecrated to God, and all of a sudden it became clear that this meant being a nun of some kind. The summer after sophomore year, I went on a pilgrimage to Italy and spent three days at a Carmelite monastery in Ravenna. There I found deep prayer, communal, liturgical prayer. It really touched me, and from then on, I sensed that I had a contemplative, monastic vocation.



Sister Sofia (center) with fellow sisters, Francesca (left) and Bonitas.



After I had decided I was going to be a nun, I fell in love and entered into a relationship that lasted for eight months. It is a wonderful thing to love and be loved, a huge part of growing up. But then my heart was broken; he fell in love with someone else. It was extremely painful, but also opened up in me a sense that maybe God was calling; maybe now I was free for God. I did have that hope, although it was so hard at the time. On the one side, I loved being loved so much, but being in the relationship left me spiritually uneasy and unsatisfied. Giving my whole heart to this person meant not giving myself totally to God. It was only later that I could see how much care God put into my life... into every detail, even the painful ones.

I first came as a visitor to the monastery in February 2005, two and a half years before I entered. Mount St. Mary's Abbey hosts monastic experience weekends twice a year, and I was directed to one by a woman I met while investigating theology programs at a nearby school. In the course of that weekend, praying with the sisters, hearing the way they spoke about Cistercian monastic life and spirituality – something struck a chord with me. It felt as if this monastic life was made for me, and I for the monastic life. It was all about preferring nothing whatsoever to Christ. At a certain point I had a distinct inner experience of Jesus calling me to this place, this community and this way of life.

Meanwhile, I went to graduate school, earning my masters degree at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, now called the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. There I found a nourishing Catholic community that helped me to grow in the understanding of our faith. I graduated in May of 2007. Two weeks later, I came to the monastery as an observer – this is the last step before entering. I lived for six weeks in the enclosure to experience the community from the inside, the rhythm of life, the work and the prayer. For me, the inner experience during this time was a strange combination of great desire and complete terror. It became clear that one has to be really serious to enter a monastery. The call involves more than the obvious things like leaving family and living in a cloister. There is the



**Julia Steele and Frances Millican enjoying hot chocolate on the steps of Memorial Church, circa 2002**

sense of being called to a life of prayer, which can turn you inside out and transform you. That's what terrified me, but my desire told me I couldn't turn it down.

When I was accepted to enter, the topic of names came up. Upon receiving the habit, a postulant may choose a religious name, or keep her baptismal name as her religious name. My given name is Frances Elizabeth, but I was told they already have a Sister Mary Frances and a Sister Elizabeth, as well as a Sister Francesca. "Choose a name; pray over it," said Mother Agnes. When the idea was first presented, I had no desire for a change, but I took it to prayer and walked with it for a while. It's hard to choose a name. It's not just a matter of liking one name or another; the name has to have meaning. Actually, it has to be given by God. One day it came to me. I was reading the novel, "The Sparrow" by Mary Doria Russell. One of the characters is named Sofia, and the name struck a chord with me. I realized that there was a biblical connection in the Old Testament wisdom literature – Wisdom, Sirach, Proverbs – hymns to Holy Wisdom. The word "wisdom" is "sophia" in Greek and Jesus speaks of himself as "Wisdom Personified". I had found my name.

I entered on October 15th, 2007, and after going through the various stages of formation – postulant, novice, simply professed – my solemn profession and monastic consecration took place on April 27th, 2014. This doesn't make a big difference exteriorly – the rhythm of work and prayer continues as before – but interiorly, the impact of a life commitment is huge. I realize that life isn't going to be easy; no human life is. But I find that my struggles are intimately connected with God showing me who I am. The great challenges of this life – community, solitude, silence – are something I can embrace, because I know that God is leading me and gives me everything that I need. No matter where I am on this mysterious journey, he is there and is everything to me. An image came to me after I made my solemn vows: a rock balanced on a single point, so fragile. It stays there, balanced, not of my own capacity or control or talents, but balanced on faith. This is my life, and I wouldn't be anywhere else. ♦

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For more information on Sister Sofia's order and Mount St. Mary's Abbey in Wrentham, visit [msmabbey.org](http://msmabbey.org).



**Frances and her mom, Judith, commencement day, 2005**

# A CFO IN THE SERVICE TO THE CHURCH

Betsy Bohlen, MBA '94

**Betsy Bohlen wasted** no time finding her spiritual footing at Harvard.

“A group of students went over to the Harvard Catholic Center that first weekend for Mass,” she recalled. “There was a connection from the beginning - everyone was so welcoming. Father Bryan Hehir was the pastor then...he offered a number of seminars on the intellectual life of the church, a study session on encyclicals, lectures on the moral life of the church...it was a great education beyond my business studies, and it really deepened my faith.”

After a long career with the international consulting firm McKinsey and Company, Bohlen is working these days in service of the Church as CFO of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

“I’d helped on a pro-bono basis for many years before taking a sabbatical in 2011 to help the Archdiocese on a full-time basis,” explained Bohlen. “I was working on two initiatives: a strategic plan for our Catholic schools, and a plan for improving the financial results of parishes, and I ended up staying.”

The Archdiocese of Chicago, like Boston and others, is a significant

operation. Considering parishes, schools, cemeteries, and other assets, Chicago takes in one billion dollars in revenue, and holds several billion in assets. But church entities have historically not been run as businesses, and Bohlen argues that must change. It is changing in Chicago.

“The Archdiocese had been facing a number of financial pressures, so they were running significant deficits. The financial improvement program was one of my first projects here, and I’m happy to say we are now close to breaking even.”

Bohlen’s first year at Harvard was also graduate chaplain Father George Salzmann’s first year on campus.

“He was very committed to the grad students, and invested a lot of his time building a Catholic community,” she recalled. “I always see him at our reunions every five years. I wouldn’t expect him to remember my name, but he clearly recognizes me. I didn’t know what to expect, coming to Harvard after having already worked for two years in a secular environment, but I was told that a non-Catholic institution can make for a richer spiritual life because it’s more intentional. That’s how I found the chaplaincy at Harvard.” ♦



Betsy Bohlen, her husband, Jon, and children Anna and Dominic were in Rome for Archbishop Cupich’s consistory ceremony when he was named a Cardinal by Pope Francis.



HBS classmate, Mary Gaffney was in Rome with Betsy for the consistory for Archbishop Cupich.



# A FOCUS ON FELLOWSHIP

Jessica Yap, AB '15

*Jessica Yap has been serving as a Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) missionary at Columbia since she graduated from Harvard in 2015. This fall she has taken on a new FOCUS assignment at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.*

**"I originally thought** FOCUS would be a two-year commitment for me, but after praying about what my next steps would be, God has called me to serve as team director for FOCUS at Brown University this fall."

When I got to Harvard I had a lot of big ideas and grand plans, especially in regard to the environment and climate. My concentration was earth and planetary science, and like most students I wanted to save the world. But I realized something was missing. My dad was Malaysian Chinese and his mom (my grandmother) was a Buddhist, but he wasn't raised in a particular faith. My mother is Filipino American and I love her so much for baptizing me and raising me in the Catholic faith. When I arrived at Harvard I got involved in an organization called "Harvard College Faith & Action." It was a great group and I made a lot of friends, but I felt like something was missing. What led me to return to Mass were the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist. I had friends who were questioning why I would go to Mass, so I deliberately sought to deepen my faith and my understanding of what it means to be a Catholic, and that was when I found the FOCUS missionaries. I quickly learned that Christ needs to be the center of everything."



Jessica is now evangelizing at Brown.

The missionaries at Harvard taught me the "art of living." They serve God not by just a set of rules but by living a virtuous life. Their ideas are rooted in Christ and the Gospel, and they come with freedom and joy. Sure there are struggles for everyone, but the missionaries' identity was rooted in Christ and they saw others as brothers and sisters.

"I'm most proud of the fact that I can be myself. God made me who I am and I joyfully accept that. Sometimes at Harvard people might not be true to themselves. I suppose it would have been helpful if there were others at church who are like me – an Asian-American female - when I started coming back to the Catholic faith. But, now at Columbia (and Brown) I can be a model for others and especially a model for other young Asian females to share the love of Christ. I am so thankful that God let's me be me! Being a FOCUS missionary let me re-educate myself to understand that God desires every person to flourish. ♦



Jessica Yap '15 (2nd from right) started her journey with FOCUS at Columbia University.

# A VOCATION FOR (A LONG) LIFE

Sister Margaret Dorgan, Radcliffe '48

**I am absolutely delighted** to have chosen to become a nun,” said 89 year-old Sister Margaret Dorgan, DCM, a member of St. John of the Cross Monastery Hermitage in Ellsworth, Maine. She is considered a graduate of the Radcliffe Class of 1948, but she didn’t actually earn her degree until several years later. She had a vocation that couldn’t wait.

“Mother was horrified by my decision, but my father was supportive,” said Sister Dorgan. “We were regular Mass attendees, but not overly religious.” And in fact, young Margaret never attended a parochial school growing up. She was two weeks shy of her 17th birthday when she entered Radcliffe, then the Cambridge sister school to all-male Harvard, and it was there that she found her calling, hugely influenced by the teachings of Father Leonard Feeney, a Jesuit priest and one of the preeminent theologians of his time.

The St. Benedict Center was founded in 1940 with the approval of Cardinal William O’Connell to provide instruction in the faith to the Catholic university students in the area. It was located in a former furniture store right across from St. Paul Church at the corner of Bow and Arrow streets in Harvard Square. Father Feeney, renowned as a brilliant scholastic and theologian, was transferred there in 1942, and he was very much a presence at Harvard during Margaret Dorgan’s time

at Radcliffe. She found herself spending a lot of time at the St. Benedict’s Center. (Avery Dulles, then a Harvard Law student who entered the Jesuits and went on to become a Cardinal, was also active in the St. Benedict’s Center at the time.)

“It was Father Feeney who encouraged me to become a Carmelite nun,” said Sister Dorgan. “He told me early on in my time at Radcliffe, ‘you should become a Carmelite.’ When Father Feeney told you to do something, you did it,” she joked. “He was a very influential person to many Harvard/Radcliffe students.”

And so two years shy of graduation, Margaret Dorgan entered the Carmelite monastery in Roxbury, Massachusetts to begin her formation, and later was sent to Concord, New Hampshire and the Discalced Carmelite Sisters of the Monastery of Our Lady and St. Joseph. There, she was involved in novitiate training for ten years before transferring to Maine.

When she was at Concord Carmel (as it was informally called), it was a strictly contemplative community “where the nuns were completely isolated from the world and not allowed to interact with people,” noted Sister Dorgan. “Now, things are more open and accepting of modern life.” She would see others in her Radcliffe college circle similarly influenced by the charismatic Father Feeney, only to see all of them eventually leave. But Margaret Dorgan’s vocation would be for life.

Years after entering religious life, Sister Dorgan addressed some unfinished business, earning her college degree in philosophy. “When I did finally complete my degree at Harvard, I titled my thesis ‘Perceptual Processes and Mystical Experience.’ We had goats at the monastery in Concord, and I named the goats, ‘Persy’ and ‘Mysti’ after the title of my thesis.” ♦

*Sister Dorgan has written extensively. Her articles have appeared in ‘Spiritual Life,’ ‘Cross Currents,’ ‘Review for Religious,’ ‘Word & Spirit’ and other publications. She has given workshops on spiritual development in this country, Canada and Ireland.*



The St. Benedict Center was started by Father Leonard Feeney and was located directly across Arrow Street from St. Paul Church.



# WELCOMING THE STRANGER

Monica Tay Belej, JD '01

**Monica Tay Belej** (pronounced “Beh-LAY”) is doing exactly what she wants to be doing with her life. It just that it happens to put her in the middle of one of the most controversial issues in the United States in 2017: Immigration.

As an immigration attorney for Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan, Monica has a bird’s eye view of the complexity - and she says, the misunderstanding - of the immigration issue from an office that helps hundreds of people every year.

“There’s a lot of fear and misinformation out there,” she says. “I don’t think even the most ardent, pro-immigrant advocate has a problem with observing the law and protecting our borders. Even the U.S. Confraternity of Bishops acknowledges that. But it’s an issue of human dignity. Every human being has the right to be safe. Misunderstandings get repeated, and eventually are adopted as facts, like the line I hear all the time: ‘My grandfather came over the right way!’”

In rebuttal, Monica cites the case in her office from this past May, when a Philippine U.S. citizen was finally granted a petition first filed in 1993 to bring a sibling to the United States. “That’s a 24-year wait for a US citizen with a sibling coming here ‘the right way,’” she says.

Most people think a person is either a US citizen or in the country illegally, explained Monica, but there are many kinds of immigrants in between: students, asylum seekers, refugees, temporary workers - the list goes on, and Monica’s office is there to assist.

“There is a Gospel mission in all this - ‘welcoming the stranger’ - that guides our orientation regardless of a person’s particular issue,” says the mother of two children. “The Catholic identity of this agency is robust; we have prayer before meetings...It’s the first time I’ve ever worked for a Catholic organization and it definitely feels different.”

Monica remembers her days at Harvard with fondness. She was a member of the Harvard Catholic Student Association, and regularly worshiped at St Paul’s in Harvard Square.

“I loved St Paul’s...great memories. It’s almost like remembering myself as a child. I look back and think now that I was immature in my faith. It was in my late 30’s that I had more of a breakthrough spiritually. At Harvard, you’re surrounded by brilliant people. I was intimidated, quiet at first, but eventually you get out there and learn to flex your muscles. I had close friends who were Catholic, and faithful orthodox Jews - a universality of believers.”

Monica says her most memorable moment at Harvard was assisting on a brief promoting a ban on partial birth abortion - “A once in a lifetime opportunity to help,” she remembers. But now she is “helping the stranger” every day from a tiny office in Clinton Township, Michigan.

“Immigration law is really complex. Someone might be here undocumented, but there might be a way to help them.” ♦



Monica Tay Belej JD '01, serves as an immigration attorney for Catholic Charities in Michigan.



Monica Tay Belej JD '01

# "IF YOU THINK GOD IS CALLING YOU..."

Sister Maria Veritas, AB'10

*Mary Anne Marks '10 entered the convent just a couple of months after graduating from Harvard, joining the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist as Sister Maria Veritas. The Queens, New York native is presently working toward a doctorate from Catholic University of America where she is a "religious in residence," working with campus ministry at CUA. She belongs to an exclusive club: those who have delivered the Latin address at Harvard's commencement ceremony. When HCC Magazine editor Scott Wahle spoke with her last year she was teaching religion at St. Ignatius of Loyola High School in Chicago.*

**SW:** How did you get your name, Sister?

**Sister Maria:** My given name is Mary Anne Marks, but in our community, you pick three names you think you'd like and give them to the mother superior to mix and match as she pleases. So there you go - Sister Maria Veritas!

**SW:** What attracted you to the Dominican order?

**Sister Maria:** I found out about the Dominicans in high school. I had thought about being a teacher someday, and I knew Dominicans were teachers. When I read the biography of St. Dominic, I was so impressed with the way he loved the truth. His zeal for saving souls appealed to me.

**SW:** Had you already thought about religious life at that point?

**Sister Maria:** I didn't go to Catholic school until high school so I didn't see real nuns until 8th grade. The first sisters I encountered were from the community I eventually joined. My

parents had read about it, and so while visiting family in Detroit in 2000, I met the Mother Superior and the vocations director - the first sisters I had ever seen in habits. Even then, I'd had in my heart a desire of the complete gift of myself to God in some way. I saw in their joy and confidence, in the beauty of their souls that complete gift I had wanted to give of myself. But I wandered far and wide before I made it back.

**SW:** How do you mean?

**Sister Veritas:** I went through a rebellious stage in grammar school where I was going down a very wrong path, but I had a conversion experience that changed my life. The summer before 8th grade, my family went to the Lourdes shrine in France. I remember kneeling there before the Blessed Sacrament, and having a vivid experience of God as love, and that the religion I was rejecting was love, not rules. It gave me a deep desire to love Him in return. Leaving the chapel, I remember feeling zealous about doing everything for the love of God. God became my prayer - for love.

**SW:** So how did you wind up at Harvard?

**Sister Maria:** During junior year of high school I went on a retreat with my community, and the vocations director said, 'how do you know that this is what God wants for you?' I spent an agonizing night saying to God 'I want to do your will, but I always thought it was the same as my will.' So I made a kind of bet with God - and it was completely sincere at the time: if I don't get into a college, then I'll know you want me to enter a convent, but of course then I was accepted at Harvard! Great, I thought, I was right all along. But the same question came back my junior year



Sister Veritas returned to Harvard to share her joyful experience as a Dominican Sister.



Harvard's former FOCUS missionary Mike Selenski with Sister Veritas



in college: are you sure He isn't calling you now? I had anxiety about that, and started to ask people I trusted, including a priest I knew at Harvard, and the priest said, 'if you think God is calling you, you have to take that seriously.' This was the time when everyone was starting to apply to grad school.

**SW:** You're aware of the notion that it's easy to lose one's way spiritually amidst the secular culture of Harvard...

**Sister Maria:** I'm protective of Harvard - that wasn't my experience. I felt I had all the support I needed to grow in my faith. I don't want to place blame on the Harvard intellectual community. I was unsure deep down what would be most fulfilling. God gave me all the resources I needed to know the answer. But that was the great revelation at Harvard, when I had to tell everyone I was not going to go to grad school like everyone else.

**SW:** So was there "a moment" when you knew for sure?

**Sister Maria:** "I stepped into chapel one Saturday at Adoration, and sensed God's call very strongly at that moment. It happened to be the birthday of St. Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei. I love Opus Dei's message of sanctifying one's work, whatever profession you might choose. But I'm so out there, I have to wear a habit! ♦



Sister Veritas back on campus with the director of vocations for her order, Sister Joseph Andrew Bogdanowicz



Sister Veritas in class at her former assignment, St. Ignatius Loyola HS in Chicago



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 Mr. and Mrs. Nuno M. Guedes  
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 Mr. James J. Haley, Jr.  
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 Sean T. Harrington  
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 Stuart and Susanna Herro



The Catholic Student Association kickoff party, September 2017





# ANNUAL REPORT OF CONTRIBUTORS

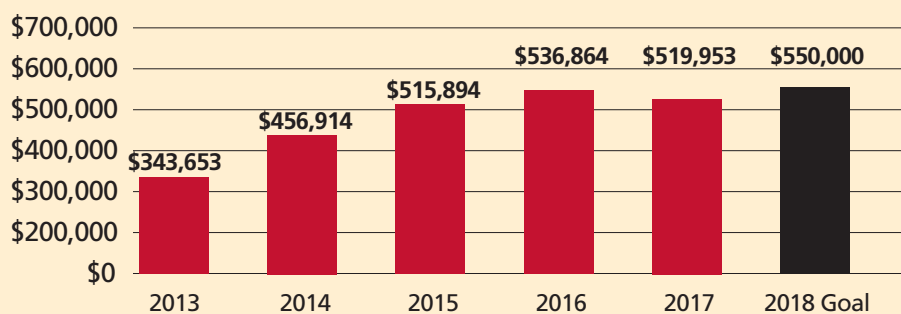
FISCAL YEAR 2017 (JULY 1, 2016-JUNE 30, 2017)

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**In memory of** Leslie and Helen Holtz.  
**In memory of** Professor Jerzy Soltan  
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 Maureen Donnellan James  
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 Dr. and Dr. Timothy D. Jenkins, MD  
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 Tzu-Huan Augustine Lo  
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 Manuel Lopez  
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 Mr. and Mrs. Edward Love  
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**In memory of** Maureen G. Lynch

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**In memory of** Mairead Florence Molumby Mahon  
 Francis J. Mahoney  
 Fr. Shaun Mahoney  
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 Marie Martino  
 Ms. Jane A. Materazzo and Mr. Gregory Kennan  
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 Richard and Deborah McCarthy  
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 Joe McCullough  
 Mr. Joseph C. McGrath  
 Mr. Daniel T. McLaughlin  
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Rev. William F. Murphy  
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 Mr. and Mrs. Richard W. Nenno  
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 Lynne Liakos O'Connor  
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 Frances Pierson O'Leary  
 Rev. Laurence Olszewski C.S.C.  
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 Thomas M. O'Reilly  
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**In memory of** Barbara L. Weissbrod

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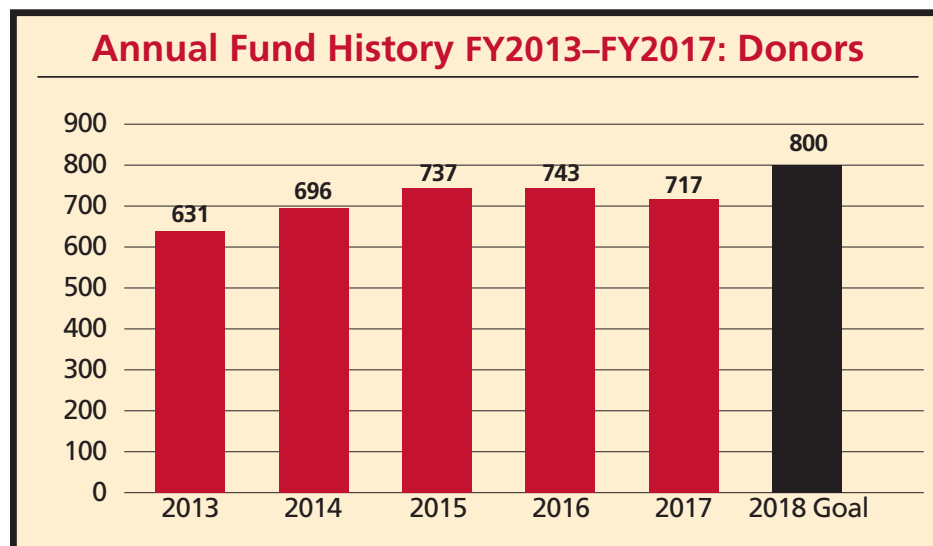
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 Kevin Quinn and Angela Hawekotte  
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**In memory of** Paul C. Reardon  
 Mr. Timothy Reckart  
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 Mr. Eugene A. Skowronski  
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 Brother Goretti Zilli



**"Selfie" with Father George after Mass at HBS**



# Harvard Catholic Center consolidated income & expenses

FISCAL YEAR 2016 (JULY 1, 2016 TO JUNE 30, 2017)

The Harvard Catholic Center relies on the support of alumni, parents, foundations and friends to be able to remain a force for Christ at Harvard.

Our ministry receives funding neither from Harvard nor the Archdiocese of Boston.

The Annual Fund isn't glamorous or flashy; it doesn't build buildings or create an endowment. But it is critical to providing steady income for the Harvard Catholic Center so that we can fulfill our mission, bringing students closer to their relationship with Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, inquiry and Catholic social teaching.

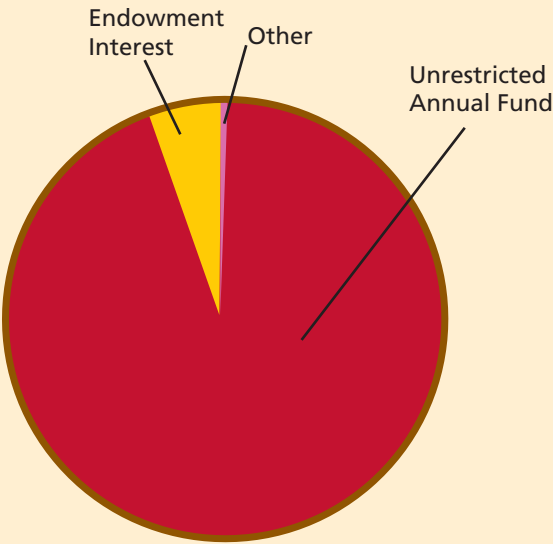
Thank you for your ongoing support. Please continue to pray for the Harvard Catholic Center.

## INCOME

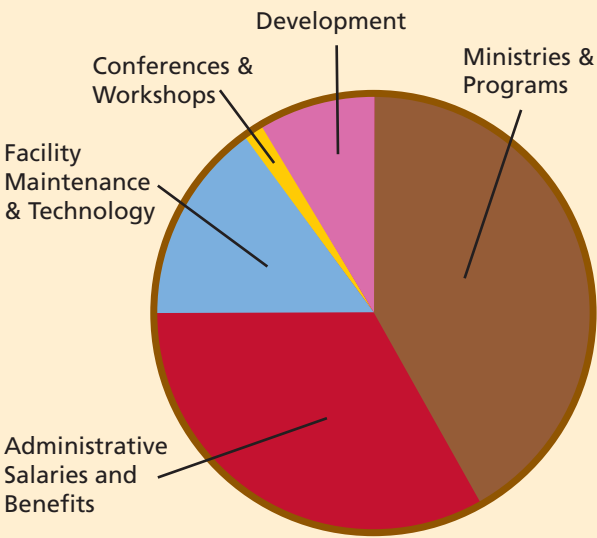
Unrestricted Annual Fund	\$519,954
Endowment Interest	\$24,2907
Other	\$700
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$544,944</b>

## EXPENSE

Ministries and Programs <i>incl. 3 priest stipends and FOCUS</i>	\$261,978
Administrative Salaries and Benefits	\$205,695
Facility Maintenance & Technology	\$95,063
Conferences & Workshops	\$9,130
Development (including printing & postage)	\$53,715
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$625,581</b>



INCOME



EXPENSE

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Please contact Doug Zack, Director of Advancement  
by email [dzack@harvardcatholic.org](mailto:dzack@harvardcatholic.org) or by phone (617) 491-8400 ext. 325  
if you are interested in discussing giving opportunities.





## HARVARD CATHOLIC CENTER

29 Mount Auburn Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138-6031

[www.harvardcatholic.org](http://www.harvardcatholic.org)

# Honor Father Salzmann with your gift!

Be part of the celebration by contributing to the Father George Salzmann Graduate Chaplain Chair.

More than one-half of Father George's priesthood has been devoted to ministering to Harvard students, and his service continues as robust as ever. You can help honor him by making a gift to fully endow the Father George Salzmann Graduate Chaplain Chair. Your participation will allow us to achieve our goal so that future priest chaplains will carry the title, "Father George Salzmann Graduate Chaplain Chair."

Letters explaining this campaign in more detail will be mailed soon, and you may also pledge and give online at [www.HarvardCatholic.org/Salzmann](http://www.HarvardCatholic.org/Salzmann).

### FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TRIBUTE

Contact **Doug Zack**, *Director of Advancement*  
(617) 491-8400 ext. 325  
or [DZack@HarvardCatholic.org](mailto:DZack@HarvardCatholic.org).

Donor Category	Level	# Gifts Needed	Amount	Cumulative
Key Patrons	\$250,000	1	\$250,000	\$250,000
	\$100,000	3	\$300,000	\$550,000
	\$50,000	4	\$200,000	\$750,000
Leadership Investors	\$25,000	10	\$250,000	\$1,000,000
	\$10,000	15	\$150,000	\$1,150,000
Benefactors	\$5,000	20	\$100,000	\$1,250,000
	<\$5,000	Many	\$250,000	\$1,500,000
GOAL				\$1,500,000

Donors at \$5,000 and above may pledge and pay over five years.

