



EDITOR'S DESK

Reunions are important in everyone's lives. Reunions help connect the dots from the past with those from present. Within the last few months two major Assumptionist reunions took place. Some Assumptionists were reunited with parishioners that they served for many years at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish on West 14th Street in Manhattan. The other event was the reunion of those who, 40 years ago, were part of Our Lady of Lourdes Seminary in Cassadaga, NY. In both cases the Assumptionists worked diligently in recruiting new parishioners in New York City or young men in Cassadaga. These reunions were a special opportunity to acknowledge how the work done by the Assumptionists positively changed people's lives. These wonderful events are the main focus of this issue of the assumptionist... In this issue you will also read some fascinating historical facts about these two places.

Also last May two lay residents at Assumptionist Center in Brighton - Jonathan English and Nathan Gadbois - traveled together, along with several Assumption College students, to attend the annual Mission to Mexico organized by Campus Ministry. This mesmerizing and inspiring journey is described by Ashley Chapdelaine, a sophomore at Assumption College. According to Ashley, this pilgrimage "captured her heart".

And, in the article titled, *The Guadalupanos Remember*, Fr Claude Grenache describes the wonderful benefits achieved after the move of Our Lady of Guadalupe parish to St. Bernard's Church in New York City. It was a move received with much love and support, especially within the Hispanic community.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and encouragement of our newsletter. If there is anything that you would like to share with our team, please do not hesitate to contact us. You can contact our team by email at: newsletter@assumptio.org

For more stories and information on the Augustinians of the Assumption, and for more pictures, please visit our website at www.assumption.us

Continued blessings - we hope you are enjoying the summer.

CASSADAGA REUNION 2006 by Patricia Morin Haggerty

The spirit of Fr. d'Alzon permeated the grounds of St. Anne-St. Patrick Parish in Sturbridge, MA at the Our Lady of Lourdes Seminary Reunion. On July 9th, the day was warm and sunny and hearts were filled with that same sense of warmth and sunshine. The essence of the "fraternal life"



that is so much a part of the Assumption charism was in evidence among the alumni who shared the seminary experience at Cassadaga.

Over 80 men and women gathered to celebrate the first large-scale reunion of Our Lady of Lourdes Seminary of Cassadaga, New York. OLLO was school, seminary, and family to young men from 1960 to 1967. It was a high school seminary run much like the early alumnates that Fr. d'Alzon began in 1871. Like the alumnates that flourished between 1871 and 1950, Cassadaga educated young men and prepared many for the priesthood during its seven-year existence.

Many of those attending the reunion echoed the same sentiments. Cassadaga was centered on community life and provided its students with a sense of rigor and discipline. It served as a foundation for good habits and instilled in all a love for the humanities. The mission was to train anyone who wanted to become a priest. Those attending the reunion, whether priest or lay person, agreed that their experience at Cassadaga was extraordinary and meaningful.

Just as Father Camillus Thibault, A.A. guided the seminary family in the 60s, he guided the reunion participants in the celebration of the liturgy on that gorgeous, sunny day. Following the liturgy, a lunch was enjoyed under a tent on the parish grounds where a repast was shared along with fond reminiscences. A brief meeting took place to update



Father Camillus Thibault, A.A., Nancy Nizankiewicz, Roger Lavigne, Mike Nizankiewicz and Kathryn Lavigne.

continued from page 1 reunion participants. As in seminary days, “un petit gouté” was enjoyed. However, this one was not prepared by Brother J.T.! Friends ended their day with a closing prayer and a final opportunity for experiencing that sense of community so important to the Assumptionist family.

Many thanks go out to Brother Steven Goguen, A.A. for starting the website (www.CassadagaSeminary.org) that led to this marvelous event. Our thanks go to all those who attended, making the day so special. Claude Carbonneau, who now lives in Rockport, Maine, commented on the day: “What an opportunity! There are too many questions and not enough time.” Robert Dupuis of Arizona



Evening prayers at St. Anne Church concluded the day

thanks to those Assumptionists who gave so much to provide a formative experience for all who attended the seminary. Perhaps long-lost friends will remain connected as a result of the day. Certainly everyone will hold the memory of the reunion in their hearts. We can intone like the Psalm: “This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad.”

remarked, “No one has aged a day!” It must be that Cassadaga contained a bit of the fountain of youth!

Not only was the day an opportunity to celebrate the Cassadaga experience, it was an opportunity to give

thanks to those Assumptionists who gave so much to provide a formative experience for all who attended the seminary. Perhaps long-lost friends will remain connected as a result of the day. Certainly everyone will hold the memory of the reunion in their hearts. We can intone like the Psalm: “This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad.”

IT WAS A GREAT DAY by Stephen Goguen, A.A.

Often enough over the past 40 years I would recall the years spent at Lourdes Seminary in Cassadaga and this would inevitably lead me to wonder what happened to the wonderful



friends I made during those years. Yes, I did manage to keep in touch with a small handful, but what about all the others? Where were they? No way of finding out.

Then along came the Internet and websites. It started quite humbly but gradually grew bit by bit. I tracked down a few, they in turn tracked down others

and so eventually a network began to form. Contacts were renewed, informal meetings took place, and small reunions were held. Finally on July 9th, 2006 over fifty of the guys, including students, faculty and staff, met in Sturbridge, MA for the largest reunion to date.

It was a great day. Since my recollection of those days in the early 60’s were always good memories, it was reassuring to hear from these, no-longer-young, men that they also recalled the days of OLLO with much fondness and gratitude. Even the wives that graciously attended shared a glimpse of what their spouses had experienced as teenage seminarians.

The year 2010 will mark the 50th anniversary of Lourdes Seminary’s foundation. What kind of reunion can we plan for that occasion?

Stephen, A. A.

DEVELOPMENT OFFICE CORNER

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* Annuity rate depends on the age of annuitant at the time of making the gift.

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the assumptionist...

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ASSUMPTIONIST HISTORY CORNER

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in New York City



- On December 12, 1902 the brownstone at 229 West 14th Street was purchased for \$27,000.
- Sunday, February 23, 1902 marked the official opening of the new but modest chapel, which was named for Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- On January 10, 1917 the building at 231 West 14 Street was purchased, allowing OLG Chapel to be enlarged.
- Official inauguration of the renovated church

took place December 12, 1921.

- In 1949 Assumption Guild was established at the parish.
- 15 Assumptionists served as Pastors at OLG Parish during 96 years of the Assumptionist presence there.
- In 1998 the administration of the parish was transferred to the Archdiocese of New York.
- In 2003 Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish was merged with its neighboring parish to become the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Bernard's Parish.

AN INVITATION...

to Live in the Assumptionist Center

Once again, after very successful two years, Assumptionists from the Assumptionist Center, located in the Brighton section of Boston, invite young, single men who are studying and/or working to share an experience in Christian community life. While these young people would be primarily involved in studies or work, they must also choose to share common Christian values in a supportive religious atmosphere. They come together on a regular basis for meals, prayer, recreation and meetings during which they try to discover how God is working through them in their daily lives.

For more info please contact Stephen Goguen, A.A. at 617-783-0400 or by email at sgouguen@assumptio.org.

We work to build up the Church by proclaiming Jesus Christ. We give priority to education in the faith, to training responsible lay people, to awakening and affirming Christian vocations, particularly religious and priestly vocations.

Rule of Life #16

Our Lady of Lourdes Seminary in Cassadaga, NY -



- On September 17, 1960 the first seminarians arrived: 44 Freshmen, 7 Sophomores and 6 Juniors.
- During the second academic year, there were 37 Freshmen, 28 Sophomores, 6 Juniors and 6 Seniors
- The Seminary was closed in 1967. During its brief seven-year history it was home to roughly 25 Assumptionist religious and almost 300 students.

- John XXIII Retreat Center was established at the property and operated there until it was sold to the United States Department of Labor in September 1977.

MISSION TO MEXICO A Spiritual Pilgrimage by Ashley Chapdelaine

"I can remember as a young child hearing the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe being told by my Grandmother. She had a special way of telling stories and I was mesmerized every time. She even told me how she had the chance, many, many years ago, to pilgrimage to Mexico to see this divine place. It was her favorite story of Mary, and that day it became mine as well.

"Maybe someday I'll go there too, Grandmama." I once said.

"I hope you do." was her loving response.

Little did I know that our dream would one day become a reality. How proud she was when, over a decade later, I gave her the news that I would soon see, with my own eyes, that same holy place that captured her heart long ago. I remember walking into the basilica... instantly drawn to the image above the altar. I couldn't take my eyes off it. Mesmerized, just like during my grandmother's stories. The only difference was that I knew I wasn't imagining it this time. The fabric was still intact, the colors still so pure. I knew I was standing in the presence of a miracle.

How blessed was I to then have the opportunity to celebrate Mass in one of the chapels! I went to Mexico with a plan that I was going to offer everything up to Mary while I was there... and that's just what I did. I left the Basilica knowing that I could have stayed inside for a lot longer. It's a powerful experience to be among the crowds of believers. And although I may not have been able to speak the language of those around me, I knew we were brothers and sisters who share the same Mother.

Was God ironically foreshadowing my future when my Grandmother sat me down to tell me the story? I don't know. But I do believe it was my first calling to that holy land. Maybe someday I will have the chance to tell my grandchildren the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe; and then share with them the pilgrimage that captured my heart. "



REUNION AT OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE IN NEW YORK CITY by Frances M. Tomczyk

On May 17, 2006, the parishioners of Our Lady of Guadalupe were reunited with their beloved Assumptionists at a special Mass and reception. Religious and faithful had not been together since 1998 when the Augustinians of the Assumption handed over the administration of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the Archdiocese of New York.

In 2003, the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe was combined with St. Bernard's Church (both on 14th Street in Manhattan) to form the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Bernard's Parish. The merger worked out well for parishioners in both parishes.

The reunion in May was the culmination of much work on the part of individuals and parish organizations. The main collaborators were Deacon Rene Garcia, Antonio Gomez, Ignacio Ramos, Nelly Rivera, and Frances Tomczyk, along with the Curcillistas, and Cofradias. A plaque honoring the Assumptionists for founding OLG and serving the parish and the Hispanic Community of New York was presented at the Mass. The plaque now hangs in the former OLG building where all who attend daily classes or meetings will know of the work of the Assumptionists.



Frances Tomczyk

The Mass was celebrated in both English and Spanish. The main celebrant was the present Pastor, Monsignor Kevin Nelan, and concelebrating were Father Lino Gonsalves, Assistant Pastor, Fathers Claude Grenache and Peter Precourt, former Pastors of OLG, Fathers Philip Bonvouloir and Albert Brochu, who had served at OLG, Father Dennis Gallagher, the Assumptionist Regional Superior, and Father Francis, a diocesan priest from Africa, guest of the AA's in Worcester. Also in attendance were Brother John Thomas McHugh and two Assumptionist novices.

Immediately following the Mass, the parishioners went to the parish hall to sign a guest book for the Assumptionists. While waiting for the Assumptionists to arrive, the parishioners looked at a series of albums preserved by Nelly Rivera, the parish secretary. These books contained photos going back to the beginnings of OLG. Several of the albums had been created by Father Bernard Guillet, one of the deceased Assumptionists who had served at OLG.

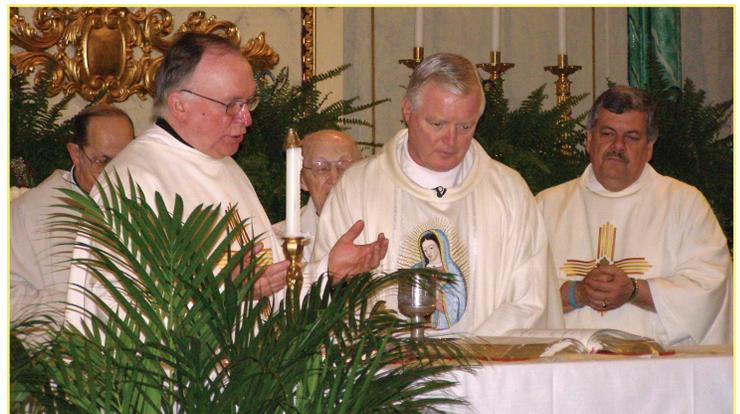
The main reason for having the Mass and reception was to reunite the parishioners with their spiritual leaders and to ensure that future parishioners would know the debt of gratitude owed to the Augustinians of the Assumption for starting the faith community, which now reaps the benefits of their century of work in New York.

THE GUADALUPANOS REMEMBER by Father Claude Grenache, A.A.

106 years after the founding Our Lady of Guadalupe parish and 6 years after returning the Parish to the Archdiocese of New York, former members of the staff returned for a recognition celebration last May.

Msgr. Kevin Nelan, the Pastor of the Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Bernard parish in Manhattan, was our gracious host. A team of former parishioners under the capable leadership of Frances Tomczyk, had prepared the celebration with much love and devotion. At the conclusion of mass, a plaque commemorating the presence of the Assumptionists at Guadalupe was dedicated.

Moving the Guadalupe community to St. Bernard's Church appears to have been a stroke of genius. The renovations at St. Bernard's make it absolutely clear that this is Our Lady's Shrine. A painting of 'La Morenita' adorns the main altar along with frescoes depicting the apparitions to Juan Diego and the present Basilica in Mexico City. The altar from the Guadalupe church is now the Blessed Sacrament altar. But the real success remains the large numbers of Hispanics attending services and receiving catechetical instruction in the new location. Whereas the former church held about 200 people, the new Sanctuary accommodates well over 800. The former Guadalupe Church and parish center are being renovated for use as a catechetical and conference center. There are apartments for visiting clergy. The 15th Street house has been sold and is being renovated for apartments.



Father Claude Grenache, A.A., Msgr. Kevin Nelan and Father Peter Precourt, A.A.)

All in all, the move to St. Bernard's Church has enhanced the ministry begun so long ago by a handful of dedicated Assumptionists. The efforts of so many of our Brothers to serve the Spanish speaking population of New York for almost 100 years continue in this new location with similar dedication and commitment. For this we can all be proud and grateful.

VIVA LA GUADALUPANA. VIVA LOS ASUNCIONISTAS.