

# Jubilee Homily—May 2, 2009

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Our lives are rooted in the mystery of God, the mystery we see expressed today in the image of the Good Shepherd and in the lives of our Brothers with whom we celebrate today. Our experience of the mystery of God unites us as a worshipping community. as part of the larger Marianist family, and as the Church. What we celebrate this afternoon is the attempt of these men to hold up to the world “the stone rejected by the builder.” Their lives, modeled on the early apostolic communities and enlivened by the spirit of Blessed Chaminade, illustrate the power of laying down one’s life out of love.

Teachers all...nuanced as philosophers, linguists. Theologians, mathematicians, sociologists, musicians, biologists, and a few other things I probably missed—the group of men we honor today reflect the full spectrum of the ministerial life of the Church. They bring the light of the gospel to everything they do. They recognize the presence of the Risen Lord in those around them. They seek in their relationships with their Brothers, their peers, their students--all those they meet—an opportunity to be touched by God and to transform their own lives in the presence of Lord.

As I was putting things together this week, I began to realize that I am getting older. I have been professed long enough to know most of these men in community or work. We would be here very late this evening were I to tell stories about each of the Jubilarians, and so I encourage each of us to share remembrances during our social time. As I think Bro. John would say: “The pURpose of the Christian life is to remember.” With due respect to their ages, their lives reflect what it means to be God’s children. We need to remember the number of people John Totten has challenged with his precise thinking and understanding...the insights into the spiritual life shared by Don Cowie as he models and cares for students (not to mention the number of fish caught at TECABOCA and Falcon Lake)...the Biology classes, the faculty development, the Province finances all handled with care and love by Richard Dix as he shares his life...the music heard around the world with Richard Martens, all done masterfully whether with *His Brothers’ Children*, the military, or the grade school children St. Mary Magdalene...the careful, loving formation provided by Richard Loerhle from Chaminade Dayton across the world to Chaminade Malawi and many places in between...the gentle Marian presence of John Rohe from John Bosco to Serra to Chaminade University to Helotes to here...the social philosophy of Ade Windisch (concentric circles and all) incarnating the experience of God as teacher, priest, recruiter, administrator, professor...the voice of the Buttons to generations of students, Harry Cornell, who assists students understanding of mysteries of universe as they work with Calculus and higher Math...Louis Mason’s work with the same mysteries as Harry but with a certain panache and wry sense of humor—getting kids to laugh during Calculus—a rare feat as they discover the complexity of the world...the Social Insight of Jerry Matz who takes the Catholic optic and helps dioceses and groups in the Church understand the social implications of their work and the many students for whom he opened a world of relationships and interaction in the social order (not to mention the one student who got his only detention in high school from a certain assistant principal, but after thirty years we’ll let that go)...the pastoral flair of Rudy Vela and his presbyteral life of twenty-five years that we celebrate today in the context of his almost forty years of profession (Sorry, Rudy, you’re older than I) during which he has shared his insight

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and experience of the divine mystery and challenged the Province to experience God through a broader Catholic optic refracted through the cultural mosaic of the Church. That sentence should provide some fodder for story telling over a diet pepsi and jalapeno popper.

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We celebrate a diverse group of men bound by the experience of God, their baptism, and their profession in the Society of Mary. Their myriad talents and their love the Virgin Mary continues to build the Church even after 75, 60, 50, and 25 years of consecration. The Apostle John writes: “what we shall be has not yet been revealed.” The lives of these men give us a glimpse of the promise of the Revelation. We know that what we work and live for is our salvation and that of the world. The good that these men continue to do rises from the power of their commitment to be the “most perfect imitation of Jesus Christ, Son of God, become Son of Mary, for the salvation of the world.” The ultimate goal of our lives as Marianists is to bring Christ to the world, as Mary did. We use education to achieve to achieve this goal—through philosophic and theologic reflection, the sciences and the humanities, pastoral and sacramental ministry.

The command of the Father to Jesus to care for the sheep is a command to us to know and to love our Brothers in community, our students and peers, those with whom we share the Marianist Family, and all those who seek God. We know ours and they know us. Together we strive to bring all peoples together into the fold of THE Good Shepherd...to reveal the divine plan...to live the gospel message...to announce to all that we in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean who was crucified and raised from dead stand before the world with these men and together proclaim the good news of the Resurrection. In the name of Jesus by whom we are saved and under the banner of August Virgin we invite all to experience the mystery of God’s presence made real in our lives and celebrated in these men.

May the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary...