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## **Greetings from Cupertino!**

I trust that your summer has been moving along pleasantly. Here in the San Francisco Bay Area we have been blessed with mild weather. The stream of visitors has been steady all summer long, bringing new life to our community day by day. Some of these were personal guests who made Directed Retreats with me. (I prefer to call them Shared Retreats).

On July 16 several of us attended the Memorial Mass for Father Jack Russi at Queen of Apostles. Father Bill Marshall, who had given the homily at the funeral mass, preached at this mass as well. Every time I visit the Marianist section at nearby Gate of Heaven cemetery I find flowers on the gravesite shared by Father Jack and Father James Mifsud. Recently, as I was guiding one of our guests through the cemetery Brother John Haster arrived with flowers, acknowledging that he drove over at least weekly to honor his lifelong friend, Father Jack.

On July 17, we celebrated the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Father Jim Imhof and on August 1, the 95<sup>th</sup> birthday of Father Lawrence Anthony George Mann. Brother Jim C said that was too long for the birthday cake, to which he replied: "Get a bigger cake!" He certainly hasn't lost his touch. In asking why a certain Brother was here, Brother Jim C acknowledged that he didn't know, but knowing Father Larry's concern about finances, commented "I understand he is giving us a generous donation." Which prompted the immediate reply: "Invite him to stay longer!" And when Brother Jim C appeared wearing a t-shirt with the words "Blood...Sweat...No tears..." he mischievously read it as "Blood...Sweat...No tears" (as in rips)...

July 22, Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene, Apostle to the Apostles, marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ordination of Father Jim Imhof and Father Joe Stefanelli. Father John McEnhill and Father William O'Connell were also ordained on July 22, but five years later. Father Joe presided, the others concelebrated, and all of us celebrated. Father Joe spoke about the ordained priesthood, and we sang Brother Howard's newly composed hymn in honor of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade. July 22 is also the anniversary of my discovery of Yosemite Valley in 1960. That summer Father Leonard Fee had arranged for Brother Leo Doyle to take Brother Ed Goerd, Father Andrew Seibold and me to Yosemite upon completion of our summer assignment which was the rewriting of the "Custom Book" for the American provinces. (That is a story in itself!)

Other celebrations included the feast of Blessed Jakob Gapp on August 13. The celebrant, Father Bill invited Brother John Samaha, who has done so much to make Blessed Jakob known, to be the homilist. A few days earlier, on August 9, Father Dan Triulzi gave us a fascinating biographical sketch of Edith Stein, now venerated as Saint Teresa Benedicata of the Cross. We are fortunate in having such resources in our community. Among our friends in our extended community, we noted that Msgr. Eugene Boyle celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. He now calls the nineties "The Awesome Years!" Anniversaries are wonderful milestones to be celebrated! During the past weeks we had several anniversaries of first professions and/or ordinations.

August 8 is very special for me. On August 8, 1942 I left home to enter the Society of Mary; on August 8, 1947 I was surprised to learn that I was being assigned to teach at Saint Louis College in Honolulu; on August 8, 1954 I celebrated my first mass at Saint Joseph Church in Hamilton, Ohio, my home parish. Each event marked a significant turning point in my personal road to Hana.

August 15, Feast of the Assumption, is the great summer feast day when many Marianists made their first profession of vows. In his homily, Father Joe noted that Mary was well prepared for this entrance into heaven. Remembering that the Assumption was also called the Dormition (The Sleeping Away) of Mary, I told Father Larry, our resident specialist on sleeping, that he is certainly well prepared for that passage to eternal life. He is certainly ready, but in no hurry. Sleeping must be contagious. The other day I found Father Jim Imhof sleeping peacefully in front of the TV while Mother Angelica was speaking to him via EWTN.

August 15 is also the anniversary of the death of Brother Eugene Giddinger who I had met years ago in San Antonio and who shared with me his recipe/formula for making a martini. So my own "San Antonio Martini" is really a way of keeping his memory alive. The giant oak tree around which the original Marianist Center was built also exploded on a sunny August 15 many years ago. Every August 20, the feast of Saint Bernard brings back memories of the large group of us who made our formal entrance into the Society of Mary in Beacon, New York on that date in 1944. Six of us are still alive and well after 67 years in the SM.

Brother Howard Hughes continues to serve us well – and patiently. The other day when we who are near the front of the chapel were dragging he made a most diplomatic speech referring to us as the Tabernacle Choir (instead of the Trombone Section) and suggested we sing loud and vigorously. He is also guilty of wishful thinking, frequently having us sing a hymn which includes the words "as we sing with one accord."

A recent note that the USPS was considering a 20 % cut prompted a comment that the Cupertino Post Office is in no danger of being closed as long as Brother John Samaha is active – and he seems to become even more active with the passage of time. Did you know that 17 of our community of 27 use e-mail? I think that's a refreshingly high number for a group of senior Marianists. Via internet we keep in touch with events beyond Cupertino, most notably recently with the World Youth Day in Madrid. The daily announcements of violence and weather disasters prompt us to be more mindful of our mission as a community of intercessory prayer.

Mr. Steve Weiner, our maintenance man, is about to complete a remarkable personal project: the paving of the front parking lot. For days he was working meticulously "with a toothbrush" to patch and seal many cracks in preparation for this momentous event. Meanwhile, Mr. John Wray, our gardener, keeps our lawn and flowers in sparkling model home and garden perfection. The resident next to us has been taking shape very quickly. The sounds and chatter of the craftsmen assure us they are working vigorously, tapping away like giant woodpeckers!

I am sure that Brother Charles Ehrenfeld would love to be out there keeping tab on the work. I think he is gracefully making the transition from baseball to football with great expectations for the Steelers, although the Pirates were certainly a pleasant surprise. Brother Bill Bolts was

the first to note that the Dayton Dragons made the front page of the sports section of the local newspapers as their remarkable record of consecutive sellouts was featured. Brother Skip told us that he and Father Larry had gone to a game there a few years ago. Surprisingly, Father Larry, whose memory is ordinarily remarkable, can't remember that. Recently I asked one Californian after another the origin of the name California, and no one was sure of the answer. Brother Jim C finally turned to GOOGLE who told us that "the most commonly accepted origin of the word California is believed to have originated in the writings of a Spanish adventure writer. Included in one of his writings was the myth of a fabled paradise, peopled by black Amazonian women (and no men) who were ruled by Queen Califia, ergo, California." Equally important information via internet: the new Texas rain gauge (a bottle cap!)

As we move gently from summer to autumn be assured that I remember you and your intentions in prayer and that I, in turn, am grateful for your interest and prayerful support.

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