



E-BULLETIN #126

"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)

item 238

what religious life means to me

How does one respond to the meaning of Religious Life after having lived it for seven decades? Peppared with joy, sadness, blessings, difficulty, laughter, love and tears, it has been, after all, a journey through the seasons of my life.

In the "springtime" of my life I knew the intensity of my love for Christ and the desire to serve Him by serving others. I felt a deep sense of being "Called" and "Chosen". Through training I learned to live a simple, humble and obedient life, all within Gospel living. It was a youthful period filled with the adventure of new companions, new studies, new prayer forms and the laughter of recreation in the evening. It was also a time periodically when you ached in remembrance of the loved ones you left behind.



In the "summer" of my life the charism of our Founder, St Vincent Pallotti, impelled me to become involved in the apostolic endeavors of our Pallottine community. This involved teaching, evangelizing, preaching the "Good News", reaching out in love to all. It was a time when our ability to function within the community was tested. Were we prepared, did we apply ourselves in earnest to the apostolate assigned us? Did we demonstrate a sense of joy in its fulfillment?

In the "autumn" of my life I knew that manner in which the Holy Spirit had enlightened me to take on responsibilities that may have puzzled me, but the saving grace was always, "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13) This was my mantra through all the years of teaching and in administration.



Now in the "winter" of my life and with God's blessings of good health and agility, I can still function in a positive way – being aware of the aging process, learning to accept weakness, sickness and the aches and pains that accompany our every day normal routine. This is the time when we can look back on the long journey with Christ and see the heights to which He has been leading us.

I am on the mountain top awaiting Christ's call, "Come, my spouse, and enter your eternal home!"

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01.06.14
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Fr Najeeb asks for your prayers

As you will have read by now, Sunni militants have driven the Iraqi government from the city of Mosul in a sudden and violent offensive. The non-combatant civilian population has been imperiled as a result, among whom are some Dominican friars. One friar living in Mosul, **Fr Najeeb Michael op**, sent a letter describing the dire situation and asking for prayers.



Dominicans have been ministering in Iraq (sponsored by the French Provinces) since 1750. The Order's presence includes both Dominican friars and sisters (Sisters of St Catherine of Siena).

Fr Najeeb (Nageeb Mekhail in some renderings) was born in 1955 in Mosul, known to us as the Biblical Nineveh. He was born to Chaldean Christian parents, and is proud of his family's ancient Christian heritage.

In 1990, after his return to Iraq, he founded the Center for the Digitization of Oriental Manuscripts

(Centre Numérique des Manuscrits Orientaux en Irak or CNMO). Over the years Fr Najeeb has collected hundreds of priceless Christian manuscripts to preserve them, as well as to make digital copies that they may be made widely available. In both work and word, Fr Najeeb expressed a strong desire to preserve the Christian heritage in Iraq and remained faithful in his service to the Christian population of his country:

"I believe it is better for me to stay with my own population, in my own country. I want to be there to help people—especially the handicapped, the homeless, and families who are in trouble—not just with material things but also to help give them direction, power, and faith. We are there supporting each other, walking together, falling together." (from an interview with the Collegetville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research)



Despite the tenuous political situation in Iraq, Fr Najeeb and his confreres elected to remain in the country. They drew their strength from the Christians who had suffered before them:

"We take the cross, we take the church, and we hold them. We suffer and die as martyrs. The situation is bad. But we have hope. It is not very easy for us to say that we will be saved, but our faith is here and it is strong."

In an interview with *Dominicana* from last year, he asked explicitly for prayers for his community and those whom they serve:

"We are not protected by anyone, just the prayers . . . we need your prayers . . . I believe in the power of prayers . . . they can change the mind of persons . . . I ask in the name of all Christians in Iraq . . . to pray for us."

Now more than ever, please remember Fr Najeeb and all those in danger in Iraq in your prayers.



DOMINICAN FRIARS
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12.06.14
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sac asia oceania e-bulletin

you commented...

on #125

Terrific to see Fr Pat's and John's stories... Had watched a program a couple of hours earlier on the scandals surrounding the Legionnaires of Christ and wondered (again, as I have all too often in recent years) whether the Church is beyond redemption. Scandalous thought, really! But Pat, John and many other good people (not least in the UAC) living faithfully help keep me going. Your bulletin came just at the right time for me, so thank you!

MB 22.06.14

It was wonderful to hear both the experience of the Syndal parish in the Holy Land and of the award given to John Nagle. When reading of the pilgrimage to the holy land, I could almost see the people and see the various holy places described. The prayer requested for peace is certainly required as both Israel and Palestine seek a way to live in harmony and love. Then the story of John's award to a well-deserved recipient. Such service to those in prison being undertaken in the vision of Pallotti. Another example of how our vocation can be lived in such real and life changing ways.

CS 22.06.14