

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

item 297

Pallottine consecrated life and vocation promotion

During this **Year of Consecrated Life**, it is a good time for the members of the Society, in particular, to reflect on our life as consecrated men, living not simply in the spirit of St Vincent Pallotti, but living witnesses of the charism through our consecration. Even though our official documents on formation, particularly the *Ratio Institutionis* state otherwise, in practice, there seems, after the time of Preparatory Formation, to be a more significant focus on priesthood rather than on Pallottine consecrated life. I have come to believe that if we shift more fully in practice our focus in both initial and ongoing formation on our Pallottine consecration that we would even more clearly see our role as members of not only the Society, but also of the Union of Catholic Apostolate.



Such a shift of focus could also aid us in our efforts to promote Pallottine spirituality, infuse it into all of our apostolic endeavors, promote the Union of Catholic Apostolate, and assist us in our vocation promotion efforts. The last one in this list might come as a surprise to some. My experience working with male discerners is that they look to consecrated life to be somehow different from diocesan priesthood. They may not be able to articulate fully what they mean, but studies in some parts of the world are showing that communities that are experiencing a rise in vocations are finding that these communities have an engaging charism that serves the needs of the Church today, communal apostolates in which more than one member engages, a shared community life, and regular common prayer.

In the *Immaculate Conception Province* of the Society in the United States of America, we utilize a variety of means to come into contact with potential members of the Society from pastoral work on university campuses to online means. A rather long period of accompaniment then follows in which we assist the person, in the spirit of St Vincent Pallotti, in finding his apostolic vocation in life. We offer discernment retreats and pilgrimages, sponsor regular discernment groups and activities, and invite serious inquirers to live-in with the community. The strength of our charism and the witness of our community life has assisted many young men and some young women in

finding their apostolic vocation in life.

Have all become members of the Society or of the Union? No. Most, though, now have a personal devotion to St Vincent Pallotti and have incorporated Pallottine spirituality into their daily lives. Some are now in diocesan seminaries, others in religious communities, engaged in teaching Catholic schools, or working in parishes or other Church institutions.

After several years of focus on vocation promotion among young adults in their late teenage years and 20's, we now have our own candidate in formation, another on the way, and two more nearing the final stages of their decision-making process, but clear that if they enter consecrated life, it will be with the Pallottines. All of them are already university educated and could choose many other things in life. In the culture of the United States, their focus on us as a community is a testimony to the attraction of our charism and way of life. We have trusted that accompaniment of those who are discerning would result in our having candidates in formation and this trust by the province has borne fruit in candidates directly for us, but also many who are using Pallottine spirituality as the basis for their apostolic action.



A **joint statement** by all three General Superiors of the Core Communities of the Union of Catholic Apostolate (Society of the Catholic Apostolate, Congregation of Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate, and Missionary Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate) on "*Vocation Promotion to Pallottine Consecrated Life*" affirms the way of accompaniment as central to our way of vocation promotion as Pallottines:

We are not recruiters trying to convince others to join us over all others. If we contextualize our vocation promotion within an overall effort at cultivating the vocation of apostles, then we are collaborating for the good of the Church and not just simply for ourselves. We are of the Church and for the Church and, therefore, we are assisting others in recognizing that engagement in the mission of the Church is something we will be doing for life as apostles of Jesus Christ...This type of cultivation requires accompaniment. Today, many young people are averse to commitment. The thought of a lifetime commitment is very daunting and seen by some as almost impossible. Our accompaniment can assist a young person in finding their particular apostolic vocation in life. We all know that Pallotti believed that everyone has this vocation, but needs to discern the particular way in which to live this vocation ("*Promoting the Vocation to Pallottine Consecrated Life,*" Joint Statement of the Core Communities of the Union of Catholic Apostolate, 12 June 2011).

As we reflect on the Solemnity of St Vincent Pallotti just celebrated [22 Jan], let us all continue to join with one another in prayer for vocations to consecrated life, particularly to the Core Communities of the Union of Catholic Apostolate.

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16.01.15
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“...radiating enthusiasm for his calling”

Werner Kriener was born in Germany on November 14, 1920, the eldest of four children of Hermann and his wife Katharine, nee Wilbrand. His family provided a strong foundation for his life in the Church. After completing school he was drafted into the 'Reichsarbeitsdienst' (Reich Labour Service) in 1939, after which he completed two semesters studying Law before being drafted into the military.

In April 1945 Werner was taken prisoner by the US Army and released again in July. He continued his studies of Law. But the war had changed him. He had met Fr. Joseph Rosskoth SAC who had introduced him to the spirituality of Schönstatt. This had helped him to get through the war and stayed with him ever since. So he decided to become a Pallottine. In October 1947 he entered the novitiate in Olpe. After completing his studies he was ordained priest on July 26, 1953.

His first pastoral appointment took him to Luneburg where many refugee families from Silesia had been stranded. Being able to celebrate Mass with them and to give them confidence in their new home gave him great satisfaction. Subsequently he was appointed migrant chaplain to the German community in Melbourne and boarded the 'Anna Salen' on March 13, 1954 in Bremerhaven on his way to Australia. There he first lived in the Pallottine community in the suburb of Kew to which there was attached a Schönstatt Shrine where the German migrants used to meet. The 1956 Olympic Games offered a special experience during which he visited the West and East German teams and invited them to Church services.



In 1957 Fr. Kriener was transferred to the Diocese of Broome, 3000 km away in the North-West. In his first year there he was assistant priest to Fr. Kevin McKelson SAC in the parish of Broome. This Australian priest was one of the profoundest experts on the culture of aborigines. To work with him for five years was a very good introduction to enable him to become a good pastor to various aboriginal communities later on.

In 1958 he went for two years to Beagle Bay Mission which had been cared for by German Pallottines since 1901. Apart from other pastoral duties Werner cared for aboriginal boys, who lived mostly in dormitories. The new missionary from Germany was soon well accepted and the boys taught him to read the tracks of kangaroos and goannas.

In 1960 Bishop Jobst transferred Fr. Kriener to another aboriginal community, Lombadina. He enjoyed the work with the people there very much despite very basic conditions. He became increasingly able to understand the aboriginal mentality and developed forms of liturgy suited to their lives.

In 1968 he was put in charge of St Joseph's Hostel in Derby which catered mainly for students attending the Derby Technical School from outlying stations and aboriginal communities. The Hostel had been built by Fr. Joseph Kearney SAC, in 1959, with Government assistance. Fr. Kriener was at the same time responsible for the pastoral care at a nearby leprosarium.

In 1973 he was transferred again, this time to Halls Creek, a former gold-mining town in the East Kimberley. His new parish was huge with only 400 Catholics. Apart from Lombadina Fr. Kriener spent his happiest years as pastor there in Halls Creek. He visited cattle stations and aboriginal communities. He learned their language, their songs and customs and year after year he invited all to some remarkable Easter liturgies (with

baptisms) and Pentecost celebrations. Pentecost meant a great deal to the aborigines who very much believe in the Spirit.

To be received by Pope John Paul II in 1986 during his visit to Alice Springs, in the heart of the country, was a special joy for Fr. Kriener together with some members of his community. In 1992 he once again went to Lombadina, this time for twelve months. For the following three years he worked in Derby as assistant priest with Fr. Wendelin Lorenz SAC.



Due to his failing health he asked for a transfer home to Germany, settling into the community in Limburg for good.

He eagerly kept up with contacts in Australia, with his family and with old friends from his time as a student at university and also with friends he had made during the war. With great joy and enthusiasm he used to recall his work with aborigines, e.g. when speaking to young people in their preparation for overseas missionary work. He happily and willingly shared with others the joy of a life lived in the spirit of the gospel and about his commitment as a priest with all its fulfilment and happiness.

Here in Germany we are grateful to Fr. Werner Kriener, not only for his commitment to Australia, but also for his witness as one of our older confreres constantly radiating his enthusiasm and gratitude for his calling by Jesus Christ. May God receive him and grant him the peace he has always longed for.

When he passed away on the morning of December 2, 2014 he was 94 years old, had been a Pallottine for 65 years and a priest for 61 years.

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on #155

I am sorry to inform you that **Fr. Joji Babu Tuneti SAC**, our Confrere, who has been suffering from Acute Lymphoblast Leukaemia, passed away yesterday afternoon 13.01.15, at St Ann's Hospital, Vijayawada. Kindly pray for the departed soul of Fr Joji Babu and the bereaved family members.

Pedro Camilo Simoes SAC
Provincial – Bangalore Province