

# Newcomers 2006

*Introducing this year's Jesuit novices*

**T**hese next pages feature about half of the men who joined the Society of Jesus in the United States this fall. (The others were in the Fall issue; you can find them at [www.company-magazine.org](http://www.company-magazine.org)) By now they've settled into the routines of life in the novitiates (there are six of them in the country), working at various ministries near the novitiate, taking classes in Jesuit history, doing

chores, and sometimes cooking for a large crew.

As Christmas approaches, the novices make plans for Christmas Eve liturgies and dinners; some leave on Christmas Day to be with families; others stay at the novitiate for Christmas and head out afterward to make the family rounds. Please send them the best Christmas wishes you can as they start to live their vocations as Jesuits.



**Christopher Canlas**  
Beale Air Force Base, California  
Chris, 27, graduated from Seattle University with a bachelor's in economics. He worked as a research intern for a psychologist and as coordinator of a psychiatry program at the University of Washington. He is fluent in Spanish, Tagalog, and Kapangpangan, and he is interested in work with nongovernmental organizations. (Oregon Province)



**Rodolfo Casals**  
Yonkers, New York  
Rudy, 31, served in the navy for thirteen years and has traveled to Asia, the Middle East, and Australia. The son of Cuban immigrants, he received a bachelor's degree in physics from the Naval Academy in Annapolis and studied at the Naval Postgraduate School. Rudy is an avid runner, swimmer, and biker. (New York Province)



**Sam Conedera**  
Portland, Oregon  
Sam, 26, holds BAs in history and Spanish from Saint Louis University and an MA in medieval history from UCLA. He spent two years as a volunteer middle school teacher at Nativity Prep Academy in San Diego and has studied and traveled in Spain. His interests include basketball, film, languages, philosophy, and political science. (California Province)



**Matthew Dunch**  
York, Pennsylvania  
Matthew, 22, received a BA in philosophy from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. His academic interests range from Latin to English literature; he spent a term at Oxford's Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. Matthew, a fourth-degree Knight of Columbus, participated in the Six Weeks a Jesuit program in Chicago. (Chicago Province)

## Newcomers



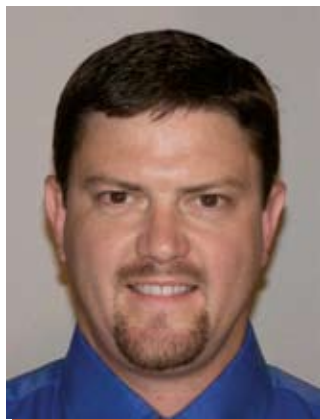
**Steven Ellis**  
Hamilton, Ohio

Steve, 23, earned a BA in political science from Wheeling Jesuit University in West Virginia and an MA in political science from Miami University in Ohio. He worked as a resident assistant and in campus ministry at Wheeling and was a teacher's assistant while at Miami University. He likes playing cards and following sports. (Chicago Province)



**Richard Fichtinger**  
St. Paul

RJ, 24, earned a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. He worked as a counselor for runaway youth in St. Paul and has volunteered with St. Steven's Homeless Shelter and the St. Paul Boys and Girls Club. RJ enjoys learning languages, swing dancing, football, and classical music. (Wisconsin Province)



**Paul Frederick, Jr.**  
Baton Rouge

Paul, 33, graduated from Louisiana Tech with a bachelor's degree in forestry. He has worked in the forestry industry for the past ten years as a timber buyer. Paul taught riflery and archery at a boy's summer camp in Ontario. He enjoys hunting, fishing, weight lifting, and spending time with friends and family. (New Orleans Province)



**Brad Held**  
Slinger, Wisconsin

Brad, 22, graduated with a BA in political science from Marquette University, where he was active in campus ministry. He has worked as a sacristan at Holy Hill National Shrine of Mary in Hubertus, Wis. He also worked as a counselor at Milwaukee's Nativity Jesuit Middle School camp this summer. (Wisconsin Province)



**John Hough**  
Oklahoma City

John, 22, received a BA in letters from the University of Oklahoma. He was treasurer and chaplain of Sigma Nu, his fraternity, and a member of St. Thomas More Catholic Center. John is an Eagle Scout and a member of the Knights of Columbus; he enjoys reading, playing percussion instruments, and hanging out with friends. (New Orleans Province)



**Gregory Kennedy**  
Hamilton, Ontario

Gregory, 31, holds a BA from the University of Toronto, an MA from the University of Alberta, and a PhD from the University of Ottawa, all in philosophy. He has worked on organic farms, as a cook in a vegetarian restaurant, and as a philosophy professor. He has particular interests in agriculture and ecological preservation. (Upper Canada Province)



**Timothy Kieras**  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Tim, 20, studied theology at Saint Louis University, where he also interned at the Center for Liturgy. He worked in maintenance at St. Francis Parish in Ann Arbor during the summers. An Eagle Scout, Tim loves skiing and rock climbing. He has played the bassoon for seven years and is learning to play the oboe. (Missouri Province)



**Leonard Mancini**  
Old Tappan, New Jersey

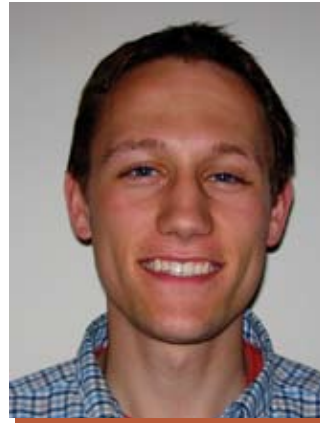
Len, 28, with a bachelor's degree in biology and a minor in theology from the University of Scranton, taught science and was director of liturgy at Scranton Prep. An avid traveler, he has led three student service trips to Appalachia and Cincinnati. His hobbies include cooking, fishing, and golf. (Maryland Province)



**Winston Mina**  
**Dagupan City, Philippines**  
 Winston, 41, earned a BA in economics and an MD at the University of the Philippines. He was the medical director for the geriatrics unit at the Harry S. Truman Memorial Veteran's Hospital in Columbia, Mo., where he was also a Eucharistic minister. He has volunteered for Habitat for Humanity and was active in the Knights of Columbus. (Missouri Province)



**Hung Nguyen**  
**Cam Ranh, Viet Nam**  
 Hung, 18, attended Loyola Academy in Wilmette, Ill., and is interested in engineering. He was a volunteer at the Vietnamese Catholic Community in Chicago and lived in a Boys Hope/Girls Hope Community for three years. He has also worked with youth groups through the Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Society. (Chicago Province)



**Cyril Pinchak**  
**Shaker Heights, Ohio**  
 Cyril, 22, graduated from John Carroll University in Cleveland with a BA in English and delivered the 2006 commencement address. He served as a Eucharistic minister at his church and as a retreat leader. Cyril has participated in mission trips to Honduras and spent eight weeks doing scientific research on glaciers in Alaska. (Detroit Province)



**Stephen Pitts**  
**Marrero, Louisiana**  
 Stephen, 22, holds a BS in computer science and a BA in math from the University of Oklahoma. He spent a year studying in Kyoto, Japan, and translated the biography of a Zen Buddhist monk. He was a research programmer at a medical foundation and was president of the Oklahoma Catholic Student Association. (New Orleans Province)



**Elias Puentes**  
**Jalisco, Mexico**  
 Elias, 34, has an associate's degree in Spanish from East Los Angeles College. He has spent the past six years as a case-worker and program director at the Jesuits' *Proyecto Pastoral* in Los Angeles. In his spare time he works out, reads, and writes about his experiences working at a homeless shelter. (California Province)



**Matthew Pyrc**  
**Flint, Michigan**  
 Matthew, 42, holds a BA in psychology from the Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio. He joined the Franciscans and earned an MDiv at Regis College in Toronto. After leaving the Franciscans, he worked as a family service coordinator and high school reentry counselor. Matthew is interested in doing peace and justice work abroad. (Oregon Province)



**Ryan Rallanka**  
**Sacramento**  
 Ryan, 22, graduated from Jesuit High in Sacramento and has a BA in sociology from Seattle University. He has sung in university choirs and plays piano. Music remains his main form of relaxation, but he also loves meditating and playing tennis. He is attracted to the Society's works that foster spiritual formation and interreligious dialogue. (Oregon Province)



**Paul Robson**  
**Winnipeg, Ontario**  
 Paul, 28, earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Winnipeg. He spent three years working with handicapped people and recently spent seven months in Darjeeling, India, doing volunteer work with Jesuits there. For fun, Paul enjoys visiting with friends over coffee, watching hockey, and running. (Upper Canada Province)

## Newcomers



**Joseph Simmons**  
Milwaukee

Joe, 24, earned BAs in Spanish and classical languages from Marquette University. He has volunteered at his alma mater, Marquette University High, teaching Spanish and Latin and coaching cross-country and forensics. Joe also led high school students on retreats to Mexico, Ireland, and Scotland. (Wisconsin Province)



**Eric Studt**  
Gardner, Massachusetts

Eric, 24, has a BA in philosophy from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass. He taught at the Jesuits' Nativity School in Worcester and has played organ and directed music at several parishes. Eric received a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship for a project on Latin American liturgical music; he enjoys literature and cooking. (New England Province)



**Stephen Szolosi**  
Columbus, Ohio

Stephen, 32, has bachelor's degrees in philosophy and creative writing from Miami University in Ohio, a master's in theology from St. John's University, and a doctorate in comparative literature from SUNY Stony Brook. When he is not studying, Stephen plays basketball and guitar and backpacks. (New York Province)



**Sylvester Tan**  
Douglasville, Georgia

Sylvester, 28, has a BA in English from The University of the South in Tennessee and a BA in philosophy from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He won a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship to study "the Changing Face of Catholicism." He is fluent in French and Italian. His interests range from Mozart to ecology. (New Orleans Province)



**Marc Valadao**  
Fort Bragg, California

Marc, 26, holds a BS in foreign service from Georgetown University and an MA in international relations from Syracuse University. He has worked for the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington and the Jesuit Refugee Service in Belgium. He has traveled in Europe and enjoys weight lifting and cooking. (California Province)



**Stephen Veldman**  
Newark, Delaware

Steve, 30, earned a BS in chemical engineering from University of South Carolina and an MS in the field from the University of Texas. He has worked as a research assistant at UT, USC, and the Los Alamos lab, focusing on microchip development and fuel cells. Steve relaxes by playing the piano and reading. He is fluent in French. (Oregon Province)



**Stephen Wolfe**  
Milwaukee

Stephen, 27, has a bachelor's degree in classical languages and a master's in theology from Marquette. Other academic interests include world literature and political philosophy. Stephen was the receptionist at Marquette's Jesuit residence for two years. In his spare time he pursues interests in languages, classical music, and card games. (Wisconsin Province)



**Joseph Yang**  
Seoul, Korea

Joseph, 30, has a bachelor's degree in voice from the Manhattan School of Music. He has spent the last few years as a choral music director and voice teacher; this past year he directed five youth choirs. He has traveled in Europe, Russia, and Thailand. He spends his leisure time listening to music, singing, and watching films. (California Province)