



These posters and prayer cards (below) are among the tools of the trade for the Society's vocation directors and promoters.

Vocation Promotion

Celebrated November 5th and year around

by Julie Bourbon

NOVEMBER 5, the Feast of All Saints and Blessed of the Society, is celebrated yearly as vocation promotion day by the ten Jesuit provinces in the United States and the province of Upper Canada. Because it fell on a Sunday this year, it was not celebrated as a feast day but was offered up as an intention in many Jesuit communities and parishes.

As in the past, the vocation directors designed a prayer card for use throughout the year in their vocation promotion efforts. The card featured a picture of Alberto Hurtado, the most recently canonized Jesuit saint, who worked for social justice in Chile and is the 50th Jesuit to be so honored. In a nod to the new reality of increased numbers of Spanish speakers in the North American Catholic Church, the card was printed in Spanish as well as English.

It reads, in part, "Gracious God, give to the Society of Jesus men who are on fire for Christ and desire in all things to love and to serve."

While some of the provinces did not plan activities specific to the day, continuing instead with their ongoing sched-

ule of discernment retreats and Come and See Weekends, several did.

In the New England Province, which includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, Jesuit novices spoke to religion classes at Boston College High School and dined with a group of students discerning religious life at the College of the Holy Cross. At Fairfield University, Jesuit scholastics met with students to talk about Jesuit life and to launch a campus discernment group. Hurtado prayer cards were distributed at Cheverus High in Portland and at Fairfield Prep, while parishes throughout the province included inserts in their bulletins.

The New York and Maryland Provinces, which are served by the same vocation director and include New York, New Jersey, Delaware, D.C., Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, planned a number of events. Homilies at Loyola College in Maryland were all geared toward vocations, with a vocation dinner planned for later in the week. The Jesuit communities of St. Ignatius Loyola (Manhattan) and Loyola Hall at Fordham University gathered in prayer for vocations.

Jesuit scholastics spoke to students at Canisius College and Canisius High in Buffalo as well as at Fordham Prep, Gonzaga College High in D.C., Scranton

Prep, and St. Joseph's Prep. Novices did the same at Regis High in Manhattan and St. Peter's Prep in Jersey City. The novices who went to Xavier High in Manhattan not only spoke to classes but joined them for a pizza luncheon hosted by campus ministry. Not to be outdone, the Jesuit community at Scranton University hosted a pizza party for 25 freshman graduates of Jesuit high schools, and Fordham University not only hosted a sock hop and pizza party but engaged in a little competitive sportsmanship with a Jesuits vs. students kickball game. No word on which team emerged victorious.

Fordham also screened the new documentary *Xavier*, produced by two Jesuits of the New Orleans Province, where vocation director Fr. Marvin Kitten, SJ, is in his sixteenth year on the job. The longest serving of the current vocation directors, he recalls the time before the internet and e-mail when he might spend months corresponding by letter with a young man to determine whether he might be a suitable candidate. While times have changed, the experience of discerning vocations with so many sincere young men, he said, has always been a privilege and a pleasure.

"When I think about all the interactions I've had with all these interesting people," Kitten, 75, said, "they certainly keep one on one's toes, as it were, and enriched." **G**



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